

1-1-1965

# The Palimpsest, vol.46 no.1, January 1965

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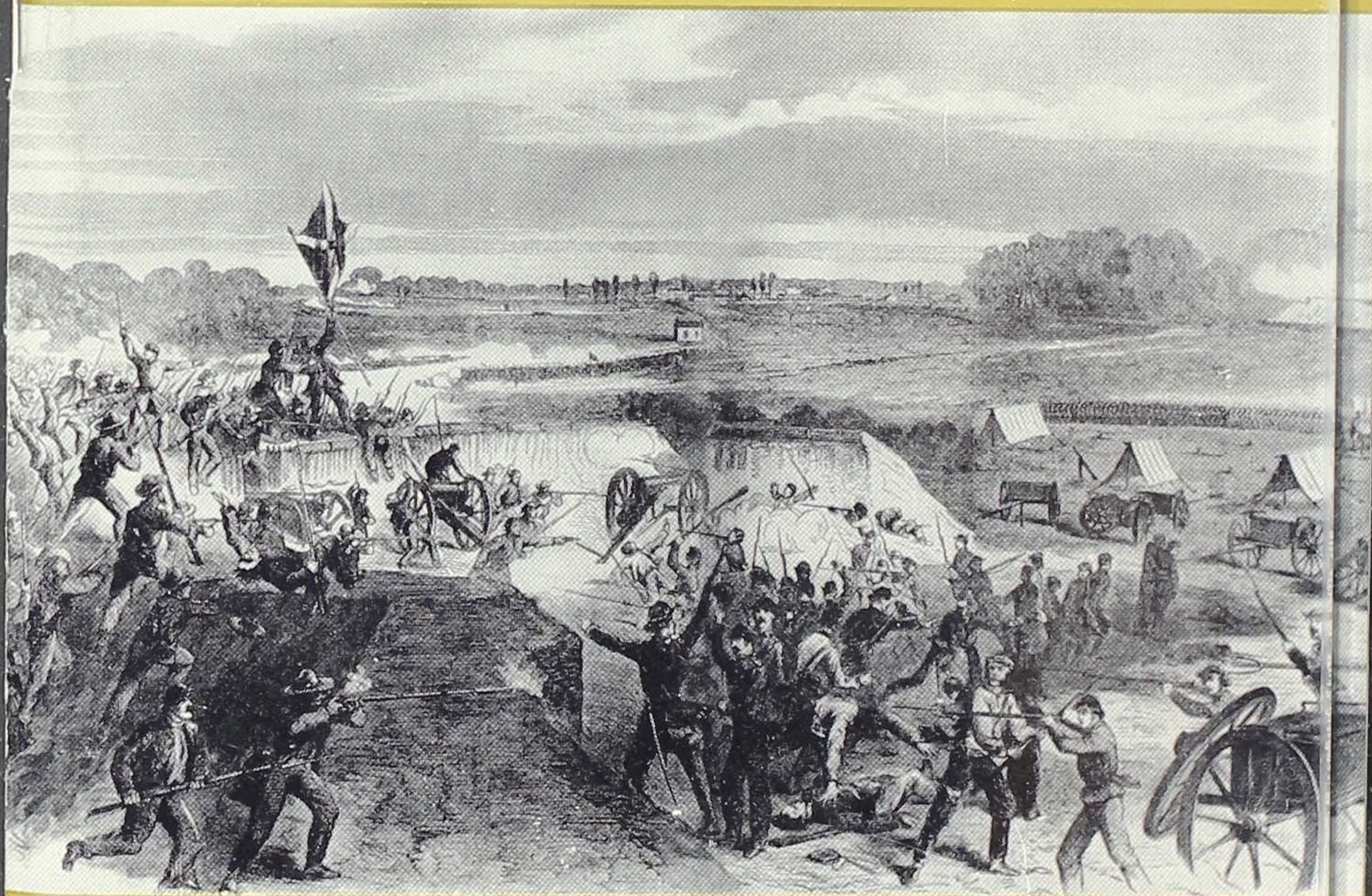
"The Palimpsest, vol.46 no.1, January 1965." *The Palimpsest* 46 (1965).

Available at: <https://ir.uiowa.edu/palimpsest/vol46/iss1/1>

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# *The* **PALIMPSEST**



The Battle of Corinth — Storming Battery Robinett.

From *Harper's Weekly*, November 1, 1862

## **First Regiment Iowa Volunteers**

Through the Eyes of Two Dubuquers

Published Monthly by

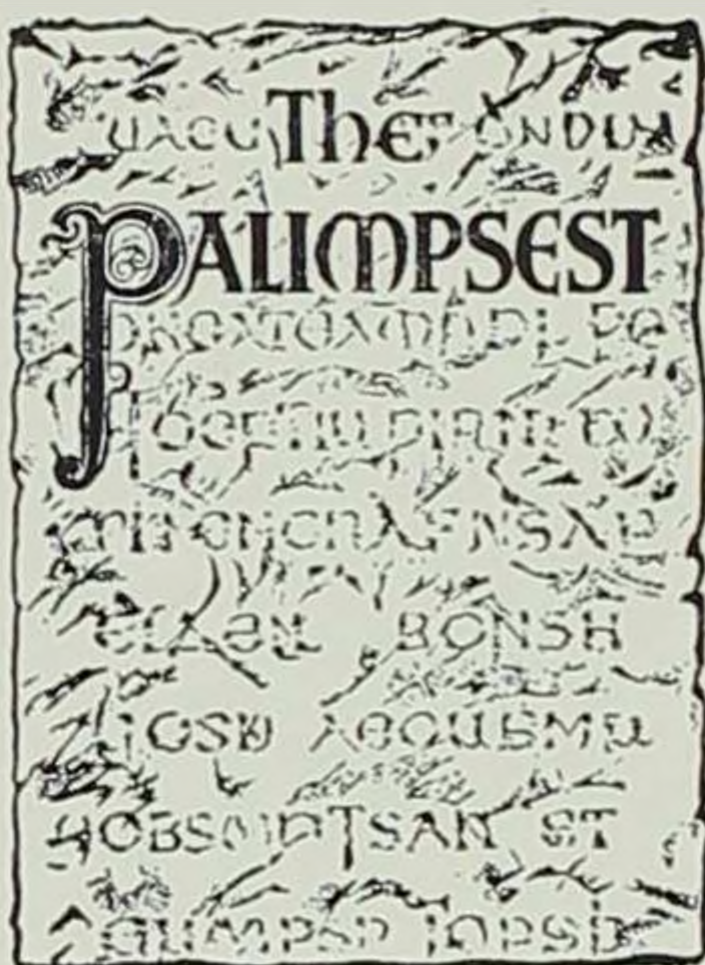
**The State Historical Society of Iowa**

Iowa City, Iowa

JANUARY, 1965

SPECIAL EDITION — FIFTY CENTS





## The Meaning of Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

## Contents

### FIRST REGIMENT IOWA VOLUNTEERS

RICHARD "DICK" MARTIN

Franc B. Wilkie — War Correspondent	1
Alexander Simplot — Artist	7
Army Life in Iowa	17
Marching through Missouri	25
War on the Rivers	46
Editor's Comment	60

## Illustrations

All illustrations in the 16-page insert are from original Simplot sketches except those on pages 1 and 16, the photo of Mr. and Mrs. Simplot and the Monument to War Correspondents and Special Artists. Troops leaving Dubuque on the *Alhambra* on page 1, and the pictures on the front and back covers of *THE PALIMPSEST* are from the woodcut reproductions of Simplot's sketches in *Harper's Weekly*.

## Author

Richard D. Martin, Sunday Editor of the *Dubuque Telegraph-Herald*, is a graduate of Augustana College at Rock Island. He began his journalism career with the *Davenport Democrat* in 1954 and joined the *Telegraph-Herald* staff in 1960. His work on Wilkie and Simplot originally appeared in a series of five articles in the *Telegraph-Herald* and won a "Special Commendation Award" from the United States Civil War Centennial Commission. Mr. Martin is especially grateful for assistance to Raymond L. Simplot of Madison, whose large collection of Simplot sketches was given to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

THE PALIMPSEST is published monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City, William J. Petersen, Editor. It is printed in Iowa City and distributed free to Society members, depositories, and exchanges. This is the January, 1965, issue and is Number 1 of Volume 46. Second class postage paid at Iowa City, Iowa.

PRICE — Included in Membership. Regular issues, 25¢; Special—50¢  
MEMBERSHIP — By application. Annual Dues \$3.00  
ADDRESS — The State Historical Society, Iowa City, Iowa



# THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY WILLIAM J. PETERSEN

VOL. XLVI

ISSUED IN JANUARY 1965

No. 1

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## Franc Wilkie—War Correspondent

Today one can pick up hundreds of books, pamphlets, and illustrations about the Civil War and learn just what happened. But it was not that easy a century ago when Iowans wanted to learn how their sons were faring in the war between the North and the South. There was no television, no radio, no up-to-date news bulletins, no movies or photos of battles.

The task of reporting the battles went to a select group of hard-riding, tough-minded newspaper reporters. Showing the "folks back home" what the war looked like was the task of an even smaller group of "Special Artists." These men drew pictures of supply trains, the camps of the army, and the battle scenes. Between the two types of individuals — the reporter with his word accounts and the special artist with his drawings — the people back home learned about the Civil War, mostly through their local newspapers and the national press and illustrated weekly newspapers of the day.



Iowa had the distinction of providing the Civil War with two of the more important reporters — one a writer, the other an artist. Franc B. Wilkie, a Dubuque newspaperman (formerly of Davenport), became one of the most famous war correspondents of the Civil War. Alexander Simplot, a Dubuque schoolteacher, was unique among the handful of artists that covered the war for the national press in that he was the only man without formal training in art to become one of the select group of special artists.

The Civil War was only the beginning of Franc B. Wilkie's career in journalism. Wilkie left Dubuque in 1861 to cover the activities of two companies of Dubuque soldiers for the *Dubuque Herald*. He never returned after the war to live in Iowa.

Wilkie was born on July 2, 1832, in West Charlton, New York. He ran away from home at 13 for two years but returned to work for farmers while attending school. At 18, Wilkie worked as a blacksmith and continued his studies so that when he entered Union College, Schenectady, New York, in 1855, he was enrolled as a sophomore and completed the prescribed course. Curiously, Alexander Simplot graduated from Union College in 1858.

From a job on the *Schenectady Star*, Wilkie moved to Davenport where he helped establish the *Davenport Daily News*, a paper destined to become a victim of the financial crisis of 1857. One



of Wilkie's schoolmates at Union College had been George C. Harrington, the son of an Illinois farmer. Harrington's brother, John, a successful steamboat man who lived in Davenport, offered to share his money with his brother. Harrington agreed with Wilkie that he should provide the capital and Wilkie run the paper. The first issue of the *Daily Evening News* was printed on September 20, 1856, but by early 1857 the paper was in financial difficulty. Additional trouble occurred when Harrington's "rich" brother bet \$2,000 that John C. Fremont would defeat James Buchanan in the election of 1856. The money he lost had been planned for the newspaper.

When the *Daily Evening News* was sold, Wilkie was left without a cent. He stayed in Davenport and spent three months writing a book printed under the title of *Davenport Past and Present* in 1858. Believing that he was still financially liable from the sale of the *Daily Evening News*, Wilkie signed over the rights to his book, and as a result, never received a cent for it, except for about \$45 in expenses he was given while writing it. Sold originally for \$3 a copy, the publisher made, Wilkie claimed, \$7,000 on the sale of the book.

Wilkie had married in the spring of 1857 and now sent his wife home to her father, John Morse, a well-to-do lumber man in Elgin, Illinois. Meanwhile, Wilkie traveled around the Midwest on



several different jobs, finally going to Elgin to put out a campaign paper for Stephen A. Douglas in his race against Lincoln. While in Elgin, Wilkie studied shorthand and attained a speed of 100 words per minute, a talent that would help him as a war correspondent.

In November 1858, Wilkie wrote to several newspapers asking for work and received only one answer — from the *Dubuque Herald*. He boarded an Illinois Central train on a free pass, but discovered the pass was only good as far as Freeport, Illinois. At Freeport, he talked the conductor into giving him free passage to Dubuque, which the conductor agreed to since he was a Dubuque man.

Wilkie took the job at the *Dubuque Herald* for \$10 a week and boarded with the family of editor Joseph B. Dorr. He worked hard from nine in the morning until the paper was printed at two the following morning. When the Civil War began in 1861, the *Herald* dispatched Wilkie to travel with the first two Dubuque companies of soldiers who had answered Abraham Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers. His pay was to be \$10 a week, out of which Wilkie was to pay all his expenses. Wilkie never had to worry about stretching that \$10 a week because the *Herald* never got around to paying it.

The Dubuque newspaperman's aggressive reporting soon brought him to the attention of the



*New York Times*, which hired him as its war correspondent for the western area. His pay was now \$7.50 for each column of type he produced in the *Times*, plus all necessary expenses. One of his exploits, turning himself over to the Confederates at Lexington, Missouri, in order to get the story from the other side rated a half-column editorial in the *Times* which called his adventure "unparalleled in the history of journalism."

In 1863, Franc Wilkie, believing that most of the war was over in the Western section, and being somewhat bored, took a job as an editorial writer for the *Chicago Times*. He became one of the most famous of Chicago newspapermen and was the first president of the Chicago Press Club.

Before he died on August 13, 1892, Wilkie wrote more than 15 books, ranging in subject material from the Civil War, to fiction, to sketches of Chicago lawyers, to a full length book — *A Life of Christopher Columbus*.

His books most concerned with the Civil War are *Pen and Powder*, *Walks About Chicago*, *Personal Reminiscences of Thirty-Five Years of Journalism*, and *The Iowa First, Letters From the War*. The latter book, much sought by students of the Civil War and early Americana, is merely a collection of the articles he wrote for the *Dubuque Herald* during the first months of the war.

When Wilkie left the Civil War, he had intended to become a historian and write the his-



tories of the troops of the various states. His job with the *Chicago Times* put an end to those plans. Wilkie's sarcastic and biting style of writing made his column, "Walks About Chicago," a favorite with the public. In 1871, he was sent to London to establish a European bureau for the *Chicago Times*, the first such move by a newspaper west of the Alleghenies.

There are few records to indicate that Wilkie, the Civil War newspaperman, and Alexander Simplot, the Civil War artist, were good friends. Although both had been in Union College in New York at the same time, and both left Dubuque to cover the Civil War, they were not alike. The two men campaigned together during the Civil War, each doing his duty, but Wilkie was a hard-driving, hard-drinking newspaperman and Simplot was a quiet schoolteacher. Franc B. Wilkie was often bored and cynical with the Civil War, but Alexander Simplot found it exciting.



## Alexander Simplot—Artist

Alexander Simplot had been raised quite differently from Franc Wilkie. Born in Dubuque on January 5, 1837, Simplot was the son of one of the city's first aldermen, a wealthy merchant who did not want his son to become an artist. The Simplots were so wealthy that Alexander would remark that as a boy he was the only one in Dubuque with a drum that had been shipped up from St. Louis.

After graduating from Union College in New York, Alexander returned to Dubuque and began teaching school. Although he had spoken at his college commencement on "Plea for Artists," it probably had no effect on his parents, who had no wish for him to follow his natural aptitude for drawing.

When the first troops left from Dubuque for duty with the Union army, Simplot was at the levee to watch the steamboat *Alhambra* pull away with 200 soldiers aboard (and war correspondent Franc B. Wilkie of the *Dubuque Herald*). An estimated 3,000 people saw the steamboat leave, but Alexander Simplot also had his sketch pad and he drew the scene and then sent the sketch to *Harper's Weekly*, whose editors liked the picture.



They printed it and hired Simplot as "Special Artist" for their national illustrated weekly newspaper which reached a circulation of 115,000 during the Civil War and established itself as the foremost chronicler of the clash between the North and the South. He was commissioned to set up headquarters at Cairo, Illinois.

So Simplot became a Special Artist, one of a select group. The three illustrated weekly newspapers printed in the North depended on illustrations to fill their pages and show the people back home what the war was like.

William P. Campbell, Curator of Painting at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., has estimated that at any given time during the Civil War the number of special artists probably numbered no more than twelve, and that during the four years of the war they totaled only about thirty.

Simplot was forced to leave the war and his battle sketching in 1863 because of illness, but his two years of published sketches in *Harper's Weekly* still rank him thirteenth among the 28 special artists to whom 10 or more published drawings can be credited. His 51 published sketches of the war in Missouri and along the rivers of Mid-America abound in the pages of *Harper's*. Simplot proved to be a wise choice to cover the war on the rivers, however, because he had always been fascinated by the Mississippi River at



Dubuque, where he was born, and by the steamboats that would soon be serving as troop transports and converted warships. As a lad, he had often loitered at the Dubuque levee to watch the steamboats come in. In his later years Simplot recalled these happy days:

We seldom missed a boat during the early hours of the night, although, perforce, we had to in daylight. I know of nothing which struck my imagination more vividly than the appearance of one of our large steamers, and they were large in those days, approaching you at night with bows heading directly for you, and that was the way they made for the landing after turning out of the inner slough. The steamer with its two large furnaces, one on each side, like huge fiery eyes, and the thick black smoke surging from the chimneys, with the bellowing cough of the escaping steam, as she advanced rapidly towards you, grew bodily so large in size that she loomed up all aglow at the landing, as some base monster darting out of the darkness.

Simplot had always had a good eye for seeing things along the river, and it would now be valuable to him as an artist. Most of Simplot's sketches during the Civil War were done in pencil and probably were sent off to *Harper's* main offices in New York as quickly as possible. The illustrated weeklies thought it extraordinarily fast time if they could print a picture of a battle within two weeks of the fighting. Photography was still in its infancy in 1861; it required too much equipment and too much time for shooting and develop-



ing the picture. The artist needed only his pad of paper and a pencil.

Simplot would soon be observing new and different activities along the Mississippi River. They would be just as interesting as the steamboats he had watched, as a boy, land at Dubuque, but they would be much more dangerous. As Simplot later recalled:

At night the bright spark of the fuse, turning with the revolving shell high in the air, could be seen circling the heavens almost to the time of its explosion, three miles away.

The Iowan, unknowingly, made another contribution to our knowledge of the Civil War. Apparently young and eager for adventure, he was impressed with the carefree, Bohemian life of the war correspondents. He was probably the only artist to draw pictures of the correspondents at work and at play, and to keep notes on them. He was also probably the only combat artist who ever had a commanding officer offer to halt a march of 3,000 men so that Simplot could sketch it. It all happened while Simplot was traveling with General Sam Sturgis on a Missouri campaign:

General Sturges (sic) brigade consisted of some 3,000 men, embracing cavalry, infantry, and artillery and at times the summons line terminating with the army wagons bearing the impedimenta of the army, here and there crowning an elevation in the distance, was a peculiar and wonderful sight to see upon the rolling prairies of Mis-



souri. So much did it effect the general that, hailing me from the ambulance, which with his bodyguard headed the line, he called my attention to the sight, and proposed halting the army then and there, so as to permit me to sketch it in that position.

Unfortunately, there is no record of whether Simplot accepted the offer to halt 3,000 men for a drawing.

Simplot's other expeditions included a dinner party at a home in rebel territory. When the owner of the home discovered that Simplot was an artist for *Harper's*, "He was especially desirous that I should represent his home and have it published in *Harper's* as 'A Home of a Notorious Rebel.'" Guaranteed safe conduct, but with a pistol tucked under his belt nevertheless, Simplot rode off to the party and returned convinced that he had eaten in the home of a Confederate with Rebel officers in civilian clothes.

At another time during the campaign in Missouri, he participated in a midnight ride outside Union lines. It was in Warsaw, Missouri, that Simplot went on a raid at a home where it was believed that Confederate arms and ammunition were being hidden. They were met at the door by the elderly owner of the home and his two daughters. They explained that all they had were a few trunks left with them by a merchant in Warsaw who fled before the troops arrived in the area. The elderly householder invited Simplot and the



"invading" Yankees into his home. He served his guests coffee and sandwiches, notwithstanding the late hour of the evening, and his daughters played the piano for the visitors.

But when all the entertainment was over, the lieutenant in charge of the raiding party said he would like to check the trunks which the merchant had left behind for safekeeping. The trunks were forced open and found to contain silk goods. But under the silks were found "many boxes of caps, sundry firearms and other munitions of war." The host expressed great surprise at this discovery, claiming that the trunks had only been left with him for safekeeping. He also expressed surprise when muskets were found hidden in the Negro quarters.

Perhaps the coffee and sandwiches had left their mark, because the lieutenant who led the raid was very understanding. Chivalry was not dead. The lieutenant agreed to confiscate only the war goods and leave the silk. The elderly homeowner and his daughters were grateful for their kind treatment and presented the "raiders" with presents before they left. Simplot received three silk dress patterns as his present, and the Federal raiding party rode back to its camp.

The early war in Missouri was slow-moving and sometimes boring, and it was during this period that the newspapermen and artists covering the war began to call themselves the "Bohemian



Brigade" because of the wild and carefree life they led. To Simplot, this gay life appeared exciting and adventuresome, and as a result he was the only artist to sketch some of the scenes and leave a record of the life of a Civil War "war correspondent." The correspondents sat up until late into the night, holding long philosophical discussions, drinking heavily, and generally having a "good time." The discussions usually ended in some sort of a pitched battle and it was an unlucky hotel indeed that the correspondents and artists selected for their home. A typical discussion among the correspondents was described by one newspaperman and shows that Simplot was often in the middle of the battle. The name of the news organ represented by each of the participants was substituted for their real names.

. . . the "Commercial" threw a haversack which hit "Harper" (Simplot) in the bread basket and doubled him into a folio — knocking him against the "World," who, toppling from his center of gravity, was poising a plethoric bed thick with dire intent when the upturned legs of a chair caught and tore it open, scattering the feathers through the surging atmosphere. In falling, he capsized the table, spilling the ink, wrecking several literary books, extinguishing the "brief candle" that had faintly revealed the sanguinary fray, thus abruptly terminating hostilities, but leaving the panting heroes still defiant and undismayed.

Simplot made several sketches of these pitched battles and of the correspondents at work.



It is difficult to ascertain just how good an artist Simplot really was. The pencil drawings he sent back to *Harper's* in New York — like all other drawings for that magazine — were transformed into wood engravings. Much, if not all, of the artist's style was lost in this process. Since Simplot was the only Civil War artist who had not had previous special or professional training, his skills were somewhat limited. His Civil War sketches seldom showed people or action; more often they were scenes of activity along the Mississippi River, or army camps, or overall events.

W. Fletcher Thompson, Jr., in his book, "The Image of War," called Simplot the "unluckiest" artist of the Civil War. Simplot seemed to miss the major battles, although it was admittedly almost impossible for a man to determine what the major battles would be before they had developed. Simplot, however, was not without his moments of glory. He was proud of the fact that he was the first to send a genuine Confederate flag back to Dubuque. One of his artistic triumphs was his series of sketches made at the Battle of Memphis when Union ironclads defeated a Confederate fleet and captured the Tennessee city. Simplot was the only artist at the battle and his sketches of the river battle and the subsequent raising of the Union flag over the Post Office are the only real pictorial records of that important engagement.

After the battle of Memphis, Simplot became



ill. He had been plagued with dysentery during the course of the war and he finally left the army for the last time in the early part of 1863. Sketching the battles of the Civil War had not been "profitable" for Alexander Simplot. His notebooks show that he was paid from ten to twenty-five dollars for each sketch accepted by *Harper's*. On the basis of 50 known sketches which have been positively identified as Simplot's in *Harper's*, it would appear that the most he could have been paid was \$1,250 for almost two years work.

Simplot returned to Dubuque where he had taught school before the Civil War. In 1866, he married a former pupil, Virginia Knapp. She was eighteen years old and he was twenty-nine. Simplot engaged in several business ventures. He went into the dry goods business with two of his brothers in Dubuque but soon turned to engraving and sketching. The former Special Artist made many views of the city of Dubuque and the surrounding area. Many of these paintings and engravings are highly prized by Iowans today.

Alexander Simplot had never been poor. His father had come to Dubuque, in 1836, when there were only four main streets and seven cross streets. The elder Simplot made his fortune in the mercantile business and later expanded into pork packing and the buying and selling of grain. The grain market proved to be the financial undoing of Alexander Simplot. According to members of the



family, the artist once lost \$100,000 in speculation on the market. He never again had the money he had been accustomed to, but he was remembered as aristocratic and a fastidious dresser.

His sketches of the Civil War — highly valued now by historians — have been saved only by the purest chance. One of his sons recalled that, as a boy, he often used Simplot's Civil War sketch books to draw pictures on. Some members of the family have saved the drawings, but since Simplot's death on October 21, 1914 — when he was believed to be the oldest native-born Iowan in the State — most of his Civil War sketches have been lost, and with them has gone a priceless record of the Civil War.



## Army Life in Iowa

The Civil War actually began for Alexander Simplot and Franc B. Wilkie on a rainy April day in 1861. It was also the beginning of the war for Iowa. The steamboat *Alhambra* was drawn up at the Dubuque levee to receive two companies of Dubuque soldiers—the first group of three-month volunteers which Dubuque would send to the war. The two companies were the Governor's Greys and the Jackson Guards, the latter made up of so many German-speaking men that it was necessary later to have the oath of service translated to them.

There was at least one extra man aboard the steamboat. That was Franc B. Wilkie, the 28-year-old city editor of the *Dubuque Herald*, who was being sent to report on the activities of the two Dubuque companies.

Alexander Simplot, a young Dubuque school-teacher, sketched the *Alhambra* as the troops embarked. He sent his sketch to *Harper's Weekly* which printed it in the May 25 issue. Believing the war was likely to begin in the West, *Harper's* hired Simplot as its "Special Artist" for that area and told him to set up headquarters at Cairo, Illinois, the jumping-off point for any invasion of the South.



And so Iowa and Dubuque provided the Civil War with two reporters — Wilkie the writer, and Simplot the artist. They were destined to play an important rôle in telling the story of the great conflict.

There was little for Alexander Simplot to do at first, except to go to Cairo and wait for developments. Franc Wilkie, on the other hand, was to get a taste of army life as he traveled with the two Dubuque companies. He was to leave behind a fascinating record of the beginning of Civil War hysteria in eastern Iowa.

The *Alhambra* landed at the Davenport levee, 80 miles to the south, at eight o'clock on the morning of April 24, 1861. The new arrivals were housed in the third story of Fejervary's Block. The food consisted of beef, bread, potatoes, coffee, and butter. The companies awoke at five in the morning, had breakfast at six, were dismissed for two hours, then drilled for two hours. Then, after lunch, there was another two-hour drill beginning at two o'clock. Davenport was caught in the fever of the Civil War. Wilkie wrote:

The war excitement is progressing rapidly, if it be that it has not arrived at a state where further progression is impossible. Every third man you meet is in uniform, or else a certain stiffness in his vertebral column indicates that he is a recruit. Flags — every star there — fly from all the principal buildings — decorate cart horses — are stuck up in every window — are seen everywhere. Patriotism is boiling over — nothing is dreamed of but battles.



The arrival of the Dubuque companies brought to five the number of contingents in Davenport. Each consisted of about one hundred men. In addition to the Governor's Greys and Jackson Guards, there was Capt. Wentz's Company, a Davenport unit made up of men nearly all the same height, the Davenport City Guards, commanded by Capt. R. M. Littler, who had drawn the men from the ranks of firemen and raftsmen, and the Davenport City Artillery.

In his "Army Correspondence" to the *Dubuque Herald*, Franc Wilkie never failed to play up the probable heroism of each man and unit, but after the war he reflected again on the quality of those first troops:

I knew the young men who responded to the call, — knew them by the hundreds. They were clerks on small salaries; they were lawyers with insufficient business; they were young men with no occupation and anxious for employment; they were farmers' boys disgusted with the drudgery of the soil, and anxious to visit the wonderful world beyond them. To these were added husbands tired of the bickerings of domestic life, lovers disappointed in their affections, and ambitious elements who saw in the organization of men opportunities for command. Others, differing but little from the last named, scented political preferment, and joined the popular movement.

Physicians with limited practice were early and numerous in their applications for permission to enter the service; clergymen with unappreciative parishes, small incomes, and unsympathetic social environments, came to the front and proffered their assistance. Young men, well to do,



with virile physiques, anxious for adventure, with their hot blood thrilling in response to the sullen clamors of the drum and the shrill invocations of the fife, thronged with eagerness the recruiting stations and wrote their names in bold characters on the lists.

There was not one man in a hundred that believed there would be any war or fighting.

And for a while it was to appear, to the Iowa companies, at least, that there would be no fighting for them.

On May 6, 1861, Franc Wilkie was penning his dispatches from Keokuk, the move having been accomplished aboard the steamboat *Hawkeye State* despite a heavy rainstorm. In addition to two Dubuque companies, Capt. Wentz's Davenport company was now also on its way to war. The First Regiment Iowa Volunteer Infantry was soon to take shape, although Wilkie wondered what use it would be since it had neither artillery or cavalry or arms of any kind. Soon, however, all the troops were assembled which were to make up the First Iowa. There were two companies from Dubuque, two from Muscatine, one from Davenport, two from Burlington, and one each from Mt. Pleasant, Iowa City, and Cedar Rapids.

Soon 2,000 muskets arrived from St. Louis, but they were of such inferior quality that the troops found little to rejoice at. Noting that a guard of twelve men was placed around the warehouse on the Keokuk levee where the muskets were being stored, Wilkie wrote:



I think it would be a master stroke of policy to allow the secessionists to steal them. They are the "old-fashioned-brass-mounted-and-of-such-is-the-kingdom-of-Heaven" kind that are infinitely more dangerous to friend than enemy — will kick further than they will shoot, and are appropriately known from their awkward peculiarities in this and other respects, among our Germans as *Kuh-fuss* — "Cow-foot." They were brought hither by Col. [Samuel Ryan] Curtis for the use of the 2nd Regiment but were stopped by Lieut. Chambers, and by some happy arrangement between him and Curtis, 1000 of them have been retained here for the use of the 1st Regiment. Their appearance creates intense disgust in the mind of every recruit.

The Iowa soldiers were quartered at Camp Ellsworth, a beautiful spot about a mile north of Keokuk and about half a mile from the Mississippi River. The camp covered from two to three hundred acres and was separated from the river by a grove of trees. Although there only slightly more than a month, the boredom was to be almost too much for the Iowa troops. Writing from Camp Ellsworth on June 2, 1861, Franc B. Wilkie reported:

The details, both regular and irregular of camp life are varied, and to most of us, amusing and full of interest, all of which will probably wear off after a week's familiarity with its duties. Incessant drilling, guard mounting, either beneath a broiling sun or in a drenching rain storm, sleeping seven in a tent, washing greasy dishes, scouring rusty knives and forks, the almost State's-prison-like confinement of the soldiers; all these, and a hundred other cir-



cumstances incident to camp life, will very speedily take the romance out of the whole matter. . . . Theoretically camp life is desirable as a first class situation in Paradise or in the innermost heart of a pretty woman; practically — well “I’d rather be a dog and bay the Moon” than be a soldier liable to camp duty.

Other troops were beginning to arrive. The Second Regiment was to be made up of two companies from Davenport and one each from Keokuk, Des Moines, Fairfield, Keosauqua, Bloomfield, Washington, Lyons, and Ottumwa. The Third Regiment would have one company each from Dubuque, Knoxville, McGregor, Decorah, Nevada, Fayette, Indianola, Oskaloosa, Clarksville, and Cedar Falls.

Wilkie told the folks back home how an average day went for the new Iowa soldiers at Camp Ellsworth.

At 4:30 each morning, “Drummer’s Call” was sounded and the Drum Band assembled in front of the tents of the sleeping soldiers. At the call of “Reveille,” fifteen minutes later, the band played half a dozen tunes as it marched up and down the whole length of the tents. At 6 a.m. it was “Police Call” when every scrap of paper, bit of straw, etc., must be picked up from the area. At 6:30 there was “Surgeon’s Call” and those who were ill were marched off to be examined by the doctor. Breakfast was at 7 a.m., and at 7:30 drill began. At noon a dinner call was sounded and at 4 p.m. there



was a drill call for a company parade. At 6 p.m., "Assembly" was blown and a dress parade for all companies was staged. At 9 p.m., "Tattoo" was sounded by the band playing several musical selections and "Taps" at 9:30 meant that the lights in all privates' tents must be extinguished. The lights in captains' tents were allowed until 11 o'clock.

Franc Wilkie reported that life was boring and that singing was the chief diversion of the troops. There was one other interesting daily event in the camp:

About the only object of interest in the streets now is the drill of the Davenport City Guards — Capt. Bob Littler's somewhat famous company of firemen and raftsmen. They remind me very much of the Fire Zouaves of Washington. Their dress is black pants with a greyish stripe, grey shirts, and a grey fatigue cap. One of their amusements is to come up from supper, break into a double quick march, and continue it for a length of time that would tire an ordinary walker. Last night they ran without stopping *over four miles*, and upon reaching their quarters, instead of "laying up," they "broke out" in a gymnastic spot (sic), greatly to the wonderment of spindle-shanked clerks and narrow chested spectators. . . . In running they go company front, in single or double files, by platoons or sections, wheel flank, oblique, and thus perform all the evolutions without slackening their pace, and in just as good order as though in the ordinary step. Independent of all these immense physical advantages, the Guards have other features of value — they are sober, gentlemanly, quiet, and are fast getting to be the lions of the town.



But the Iowans were discovering that the life of a soldier was not exciting — yet. Wilkie himself slept by spreading a blanket on a gun box in his tent, then pulling another blanket over him and using a carpet sack or a coat for a pillow. He reported on another of the “diversions” in the camp, this one by one of the Dubuque companies:

In one tent of the Gov. Greys they have adopted a rule that whoever swears shall read aloud a chapter in the Bible — the book being kept constantly open for that purpose. Truth compels me to say that one can scarcely pass the tent day or night without hearing some one reading a selection of Scriptures. Among others who are thus being benefited, I may mention my handsome young friend Charley ———, who, within the last week has read all of Genesis and Exodus, and is this morning well into Leviticus, and there is a fine prospect of his finishing the entire Old Testament before the end of the three months.

But the boredom and Bible reading were soon to end. Although the three-month term of service of the First Iowa was almost over, they would soon get their taste of battle. Newspaperman Wilkie was with them when they boarded the steamboat *Jennie Deans* at Keokuk on June 13, 1861, and headed for Hannibal, Missouri.



## Marching through Missouri

While Franc Wilkie was being exposed to Army life, Alexander Simplot, now an official Special Artist for *Harper's Weekly*, was getting a leisurely first look at the war. Stationed at Cairo, Illinois, Simplot spent much of his time sketching the fortifications, camps, and troops along the river. His drawings were used extensively in *Harper's* to show the buildup of troops in the West for the eventual invasion of the South. Simplot found that his knowledge of the ways of the Mississippi River made it easier for him to describe the strange kind of warships then being built at and near St. Louis.

In addition to avoiding the rigors of camp life, Simplot had another advantage over Wilkie. He was a registered correspondent of a national publication. Wilkie was still merely the correspondent of the *Dubuque Herald*. His pay was ten dollars a month, out of which he was to pay all his own expenses. Wilkie never had to worry about trying to live off ten dollars a month as his position as a war correspondent always made it easy for him to get along, to eat in the officers' mess tent, and to get free use of a horse or a blanket.

Soon, Franc Wilkie was to be more than just a



correspondent for an Iowa newspaper. The Iowa First and Second regiments landed at Hannibal, Missouri, and the first duty of the Iowa First was to take possession of Macon, an important point some 70 miles to the west. Macon was situated at the junction of the Hannibal & St. Joseph and North Missouri railroads, making it an important strategic hamlet. On June 15, Wilkie sent a dispatch back to the *Dubuque Herald* reporting that the Iowans were in firm control of the town and surrounding area.

Wilkie was a newspaperman of the highest caliber. Finding the Macon newspaper — *The Missouri Register* — left abandoned before the advancing Union troops, Wilkie determined to put it back in operation. He obtained the permission of the troop commander to start the newspaper up again. Drafting several printers from one of the Dubuque companies, Wilkie set to work. On Saturday, June 15, 1861, the first and only issue of *Our Whole Union* appeared. About 1,800 copies of the single-sheet paper were printed, and Wilkie explained that "the paper was white, the ink blue, and the whole thing will undoubtedly be read — hence we have a patriotic paper — red, white, and blue." It was probably the only time during the Civil War when one of the first things the "invading" troops did was put out a newspaper. Missouri was torn in allegiance. Although many of its citizens sided with the North, many others sided



with the South. Missouri had already been torn by inner and outer conflict over the Civil War. Wilkie wrote that the newspaper office was not exactly as might be expected:

Men in uniform stand at the cases — a row of gleaming muskets in stacks is before the door, beside which paces a sentinel with a loaded piece — the editor's table is ornamented with a revolver, two bottles of — of — well — something to sustain a drooping spirit weighed down by the responsibilities of his position (editorial) and the dangers of war — a Meerschautn, and a pile of ancient exchanges. Military uniforms hang around the walls, bayonet sheaths litter the floor, revolvers and bowie knives bristle in every belt; and in short, the only resemblance to a printing office, is the click of types, and the familiar music of the press. . . .

Only one issue of the Macon *Our Whole Union* was printed. The Iowans were ordered to move on to new positions. But the one issue that Wilkie had produced was very much noticed. A copy somehow reached St. Louis and in no time at all an agent of the *New York Times* had sent it on to the home office. The editor was pleased with what he read and a messenger was dispatched to find this Franc Wilkie somewhere in Missouri and offer him a position.

At about this time, Wilkie was rolling across the Missouri countryside on a train pulling open cars crowded with soldiers. The Iowa troops were moving deeper into Missouri. As the train approached each clump of trees, the soldiers grasped



their weapons tighter and kept a sharp eye peeled for snipers. Wilkie, for one, began to consider his situation:

. . . As I passed these points, I would mentally resolve myself a great ass (and carry it unanimously too, without debate) for exposing my precious existence to the chances of Missouri buckshot. Suppose some fellow should by mistake give me a dose of those indigestible blue pills? Who'd care for my amiable widow — and where would she get her pension? These other fellows (so I ruminated) if upset, or if they don't get upset, get a pension (or their heirs do,) a nice 160 acres of land, and eleven dollars a month including rations — I get nothing in any such event.

It was true. As a newspaperman, Wilkie did not qualify for a government pension. Since the *Dubuque Herald* had not paid him one cent, Wilkie was in dire straits. It was shortly after Wilkie bewailed his situation that the messenger from the *New York Times* arrived. Suddenly the little country journalist from Iowa was the Western War Correspondent for the recently-founded *New York Times*, one of the growing newspapers of New York, in the city which was the hub of the journalistic world. It was beyond Franc Wilkie's wildest dreams. He was to be paid \$7.50 for each column of type he produced and his expenses were to be paid also. It was proper to have a "pen name" which would be signed to his articles in the *Times*. Wilkie decided on the name "Galway," taken from a town in which he had lived before moving west to Saratoga County, New York.



The Iowa First was now under the command of General Nathaniel Lyon, who soon after Fort Sumter had forced the surrender of Confederate militia in St. Louis and raised his own troop of volunteers. He was now engaged in chasing the Confederates across Missouri, would eventually overextend his supply lines, and meet death and defeat. The Iowa troops were part of an army of 2,700 troops, four pieces of artillery, and 150 wagons. They were soon joined by Major Samuel D. Sturgis and some 3,000 men, six artillery pieces, and two howitzers.

The Iowans were moving deeper into dangerous territory and Wilkie noted that even Chaplain Fuller was wearing a sword on his hip and had a revolver stuck in his breast pocket. He also noted, however, that he doubted much if Chaplain Fuller "can tell whether you stab a man with a revolver, or shoot him with a sword."

The Iowans covered the 60 miles between Renick, Missouri, and Boonville, on the Missouri River, in 48 hours in a blazing sun. There were several minor skirmishes along the way, but no major, or even minor engagements, and Wilkie remarked that the biggest danger facing the Union troops now was the danger that they would shoot themselves accidentally with their own weapons:

. . . Many of our recruits never saw a gun before, and are about as competent to be trusted with a loaded firearm, as would be a mule or a half-witted jackass. In fact,



I regard the danger arising from the carelessness of our own soldiers to be infinitely greater than that contained in all the deadly weapons in the hands of all our enemies in Missouri. All the blood yet spilt from the veins of the Iowa Regiment, has been let out by the members of the same. If they shoot as many of their enemies during the campaign as they do of themselves, they will make themselves immortal for their heroism and daring.

Heavy rains at Boonville kept the Union troops bottled up for about eight days. The correspondent of the *New York Times* and the *Dubuque Herald* used the time to study the famous General Lyon, whom he described as about five feet, eight inches tall and 140 to 150 pounds, wiry in build, and tough looking in appearance. His hair was worn long and thick, his whiskers bushy and heavy, both of a sandy color. General Lyon also wore a perpetual frown. Wilkie wrote:

. . . He smiles little or none, is a strict disciplinarian, has the full confidence of his men, among whom, or at least among the Regulars, he is known as "Daddy." A lot [of] Regulars will be scuffling on their campus — somebody calls out, "Daddy is coming!" and in an instant everything is as quiet as a meeting house. He goes absently along, plucking his beard carelessly with one hand, stopping here and there to give some order to ask some question in a harsh, authoritative voice, and is a sort of man that one will stop to take a good look at as he passes. I don't think he has anything like physical fear — is all through a soldier, and will yet make his mark high in the military world.

The rains ended and the troops began their



march. Wilkie made sure that the folks back home knew just what such a march was like. He pointed out that it was no grand parade, just a large group of men — dirty, swarthy, and sun burned — with real guns loaded with real bullets. The order of the march began with a company of Regulars, armed with rifled muskets; then 100 pioneers, carrying long, heavy sword bayonets at their side, on their backs, Sharpe's rifles, around their waists, 50 rounds of cartridges, and in their hands, shovels, axes, and pickaxes. Next came the artillery, each gun drawn by four powerful horses and with four cannoneers running at each wheel. Relays of harnessed led horses followed. Then came 1,000 men from Iowa, described by Wilkie as "big, powerful men, but ragged and dirty. . ." The lack of proper uniforms and weapons for the Iowans was to be a sore point for some time. Next in the line of march came 1,000 St. Louis men and Wilkie pointed out they were all dressed in blue, each carried forty rounds of cartridges, and they were armed with "glittering muskets." Then came the tremendous amount of wagons needed to bear the army's supplies, stretching almost two miles in length, then a drove of cattle, and finally a company of men selected as the rear guard. Behind each detachment or regiment of men marched its physician. If a soldier fell out of line because of sickness or fatigue, the physician might send him back to a wagon provided for such cases.



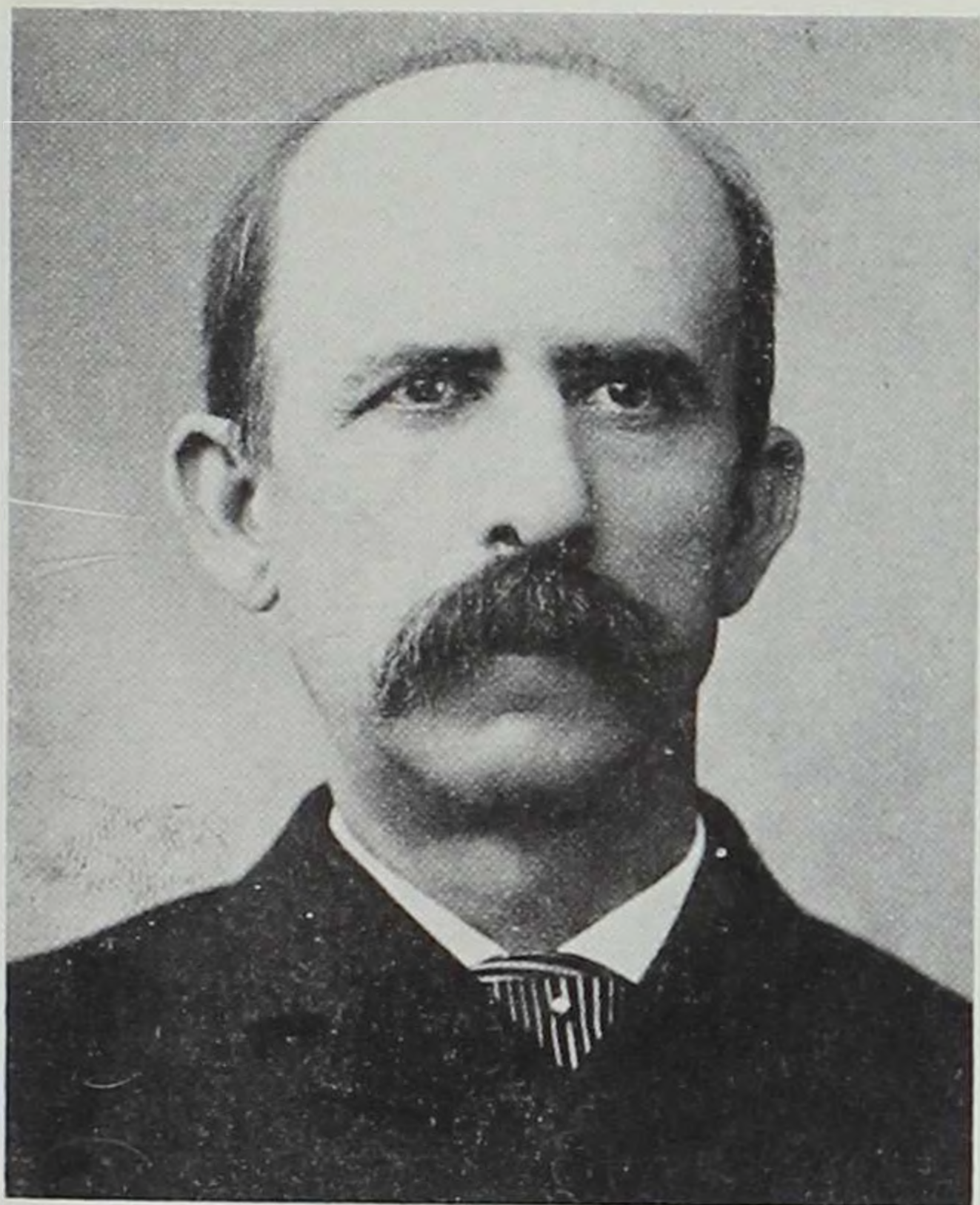
General Lyon, in an old white felt hat, was mounted on an iron-grey stallion and surrounded by his personal bodyguard. They were ten St. Louis German butchers, mounted each on his own horse and armed with heavy cavalry sabres and holster revolvers. Right behind the General rode war correspondent Franc Wilkie, "spurring a female mule, mainly remarkable for ears and laziness." The march covered 200 miles from July 3 to July 13 and ended at Springfield, Missouri.

The Iowa troops were still without their uniforms, which had been shipped to Hannibal after they left. Wilkie wrote of the sight and plight of the Iowa troops:

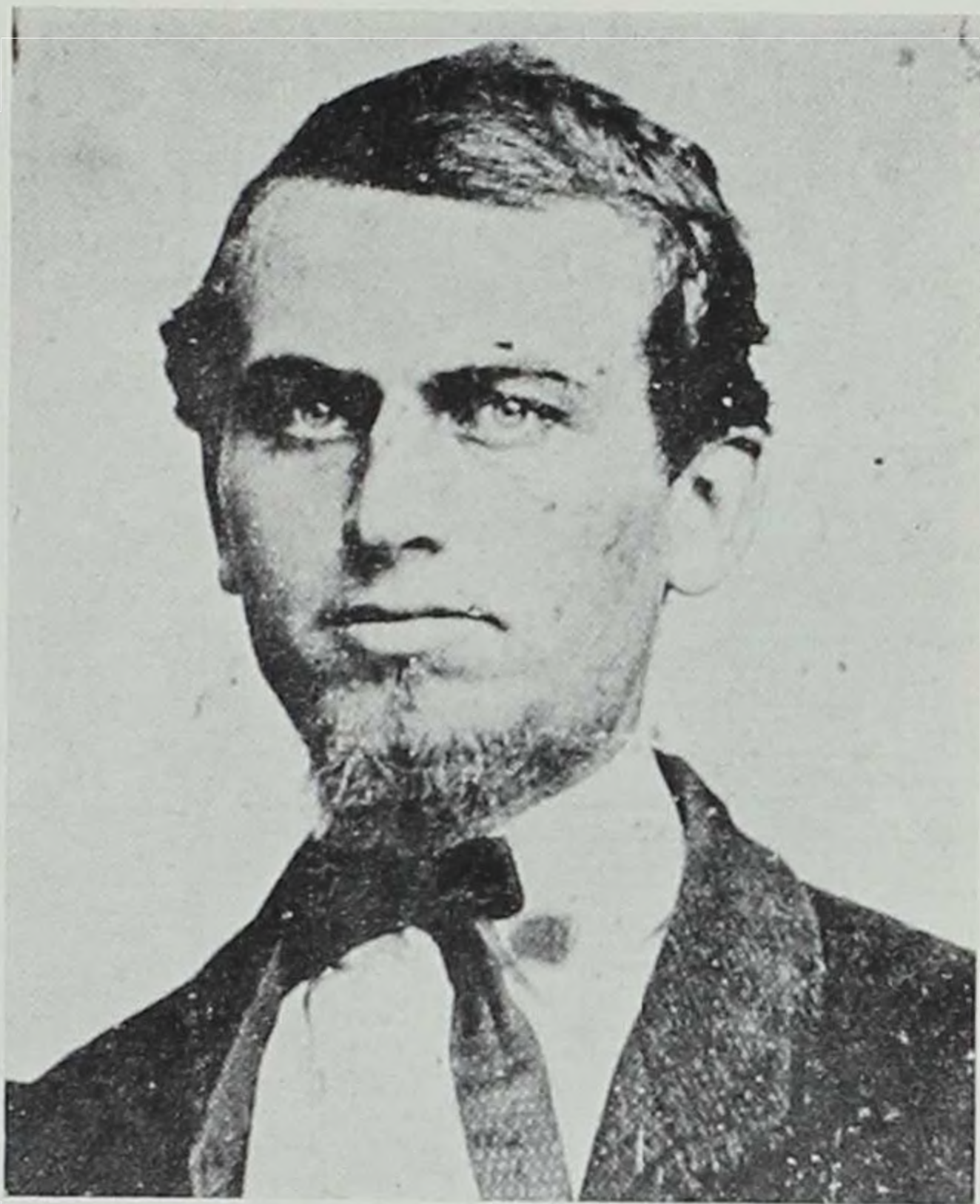
. . . Talk of scare-crows — you ought to see crows, buzzards, rabbits, and everything else with legs and wings, "get up and *git*" the very instant an Iowa man comes in sight — there's no stopping for a second look — they "put" instantly as if "sent for," and never are known to venture in that vicinity again.

While waiting for the "big battle" that was sure to come, Wilkie took part in a minor skirmish at Forsyth, about 60 miles from Springfield. A force of Federal troops drove out and broke up a Secession camp at that town. It was here that Wilkie received his only wound of the war. After the short battle, Wilkie, a captain, and a sergeant went to inspect the top floor of the three-story brick courthouse in the town. The captain was about to sit down at one side of the table and

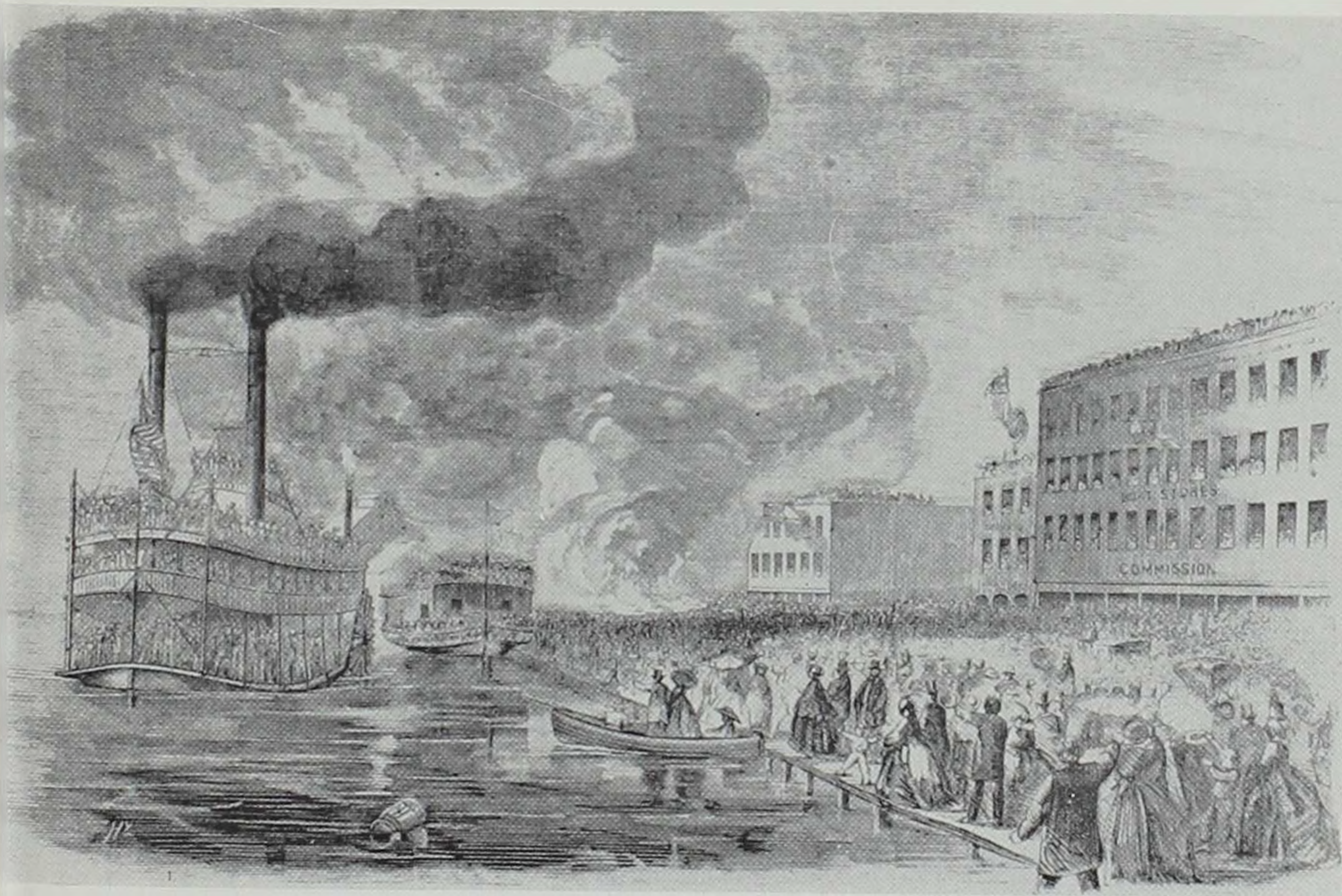




Chicago Historical Society  
FRANC B. WILKIE  
War Correspondent

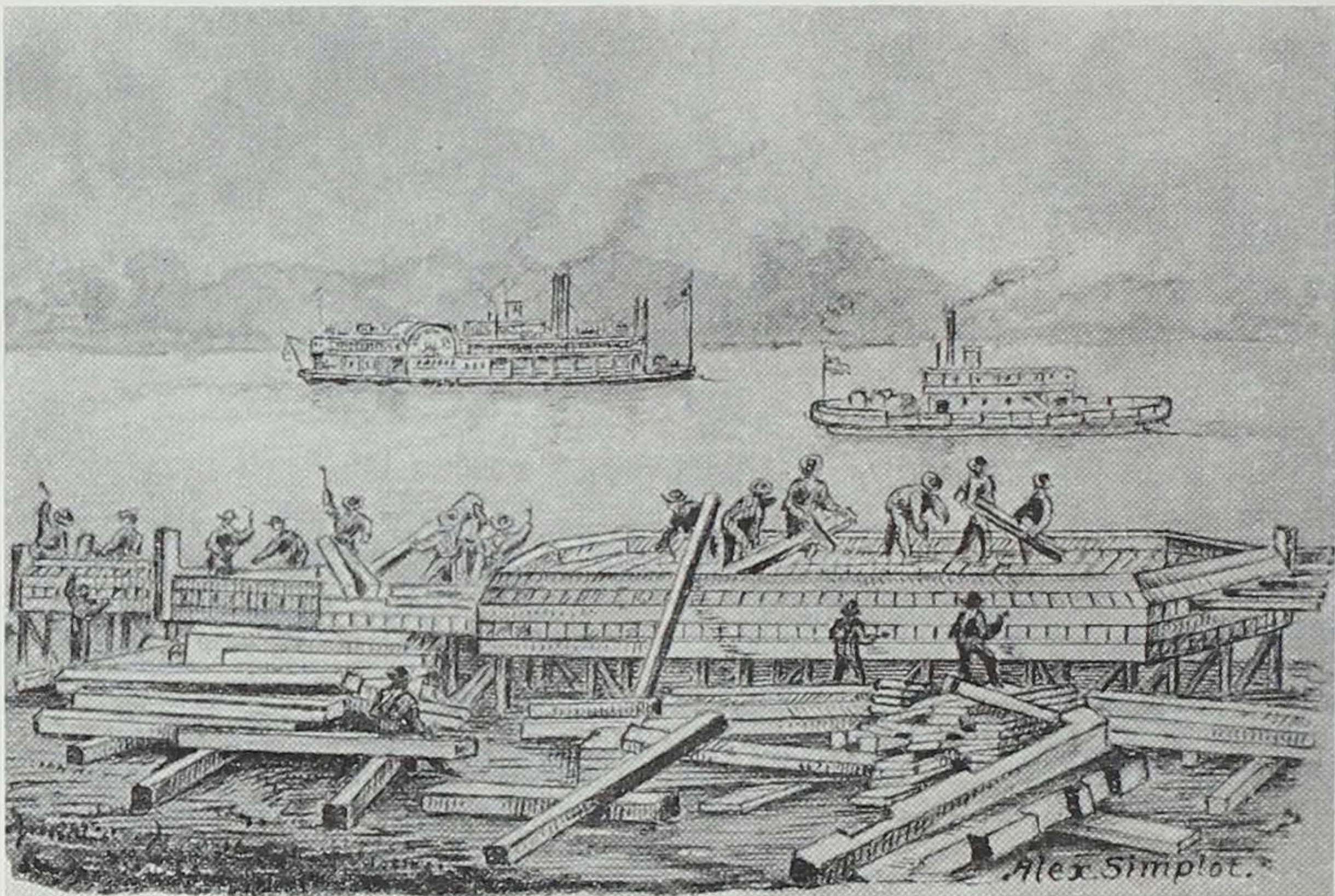


ALEXANDER SIMPLOT  
"Special Artist"



From *Harper's Weekly*, May 25, 1861  
The Governor's Greys and Jackson Guards leaving Dubuque in 1861.





*Harper's Weekly*, October 12, 1861

Courtesy Wisconsin Historical Society

Building Pontoons at St. Louis for the Mississippi Campaigns

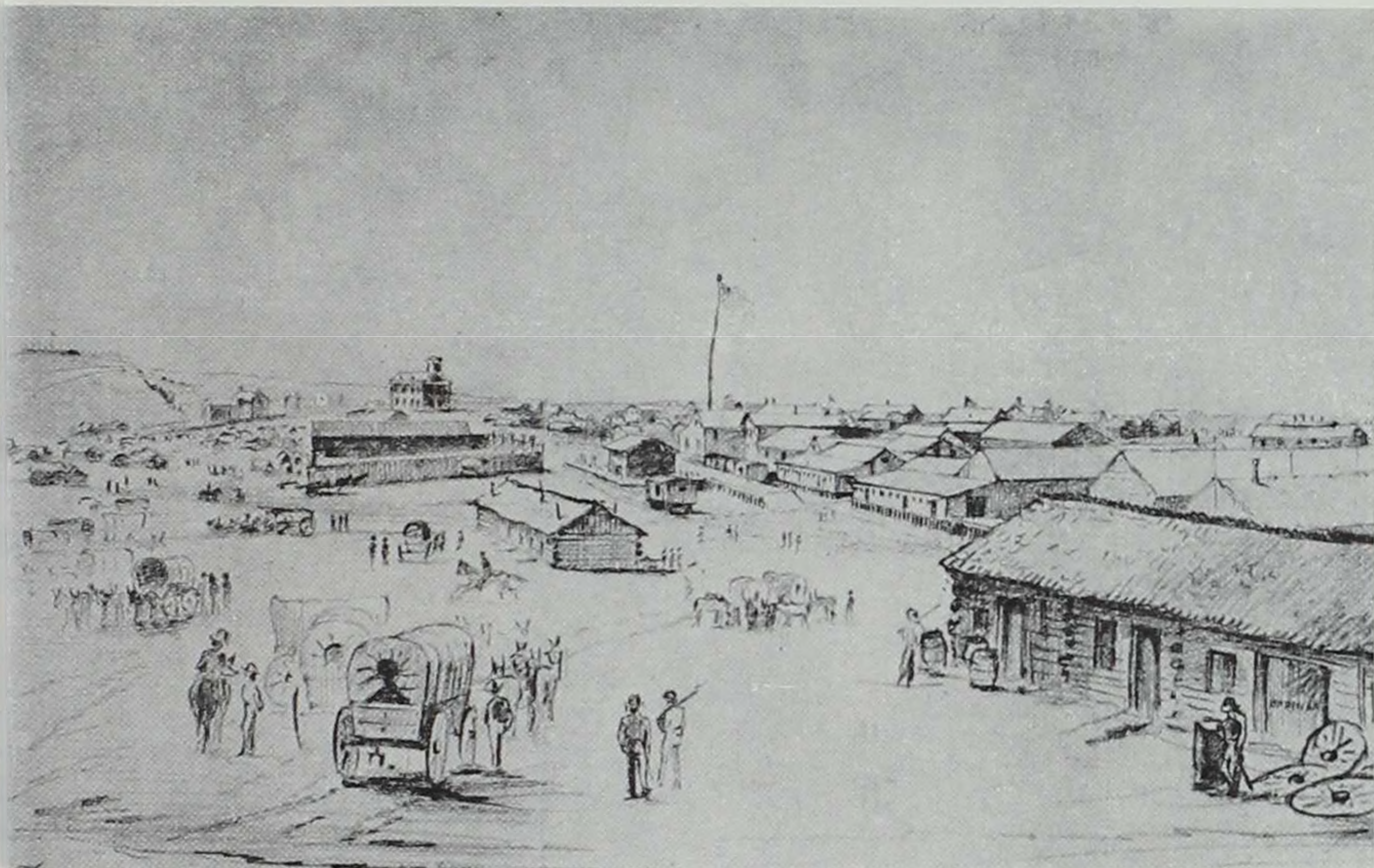


*Harper's Weekly*, January 18, 1862

Courtesy Clayton J. Met

Applying for Passes at Provost Marshal's Office in St. Louis.





Missouri Historical Society

Headquarters of the "Army of the Frontier" under General Herron at Rolla, Missouri.



LIEUT. MORRISSEY AND THE MIDNIGHT RIDE AT WARSAW MO.

Courtesy John Simplot

Lieutenant Morrissey and the Midnight Ride outside of our Lines to Discover Contraband Goods in a Private Home at Warsaw, Missouri.





Harper's Weekly, November 16, 1861

Courtesy Clayton J. Met

March of General John C. Fremont's Army through Southwestern Missouri.



Courtesy Mrs. Jeanne O'Hanlon

Fremont's Bodyguard Attack 2,500 Rebels on Wilson's Creek, near Springfield.

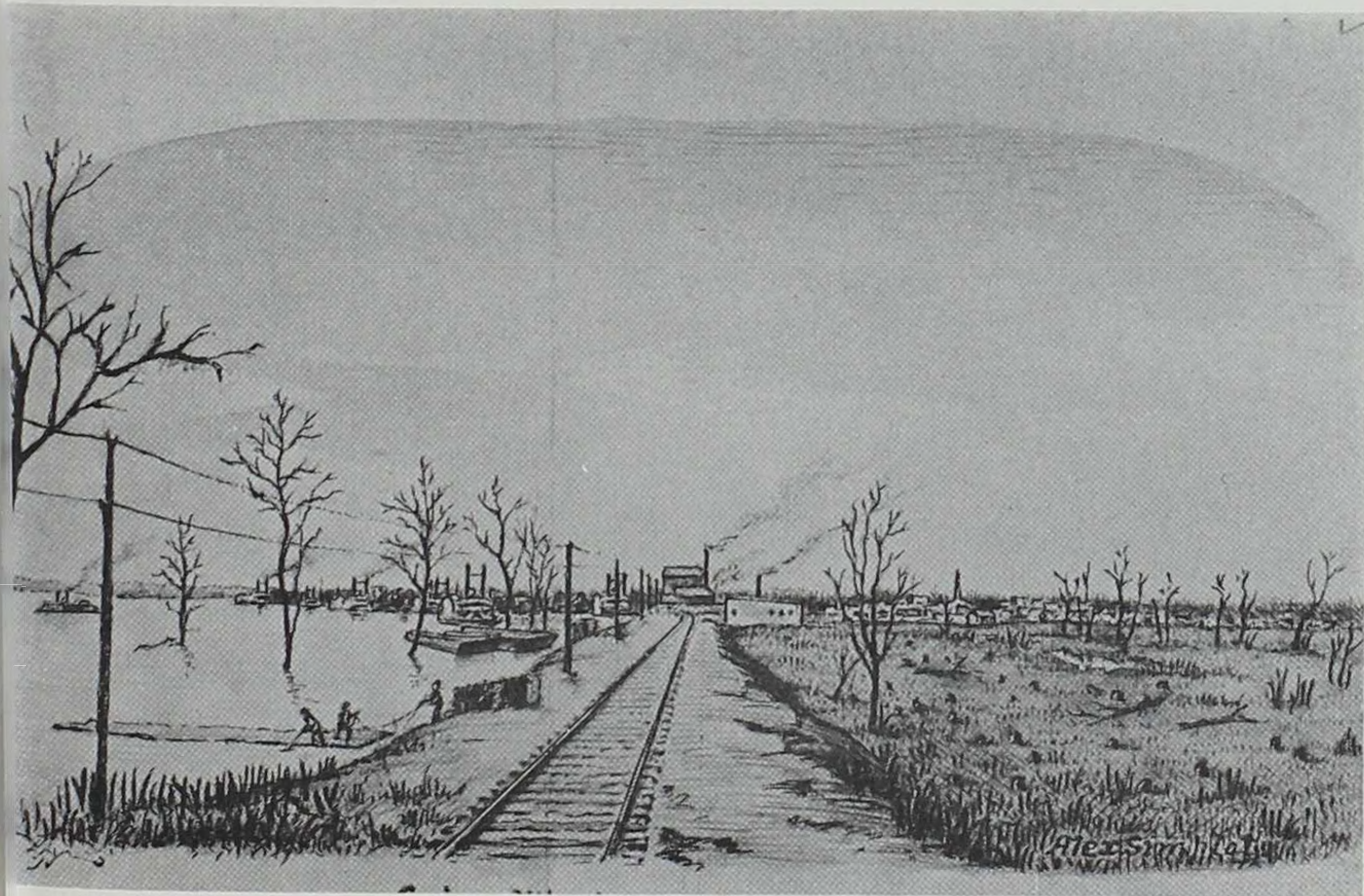




Harper's Weekly, October 26, 1861

Courtesy Mrs. Jeanne O'Hanlon

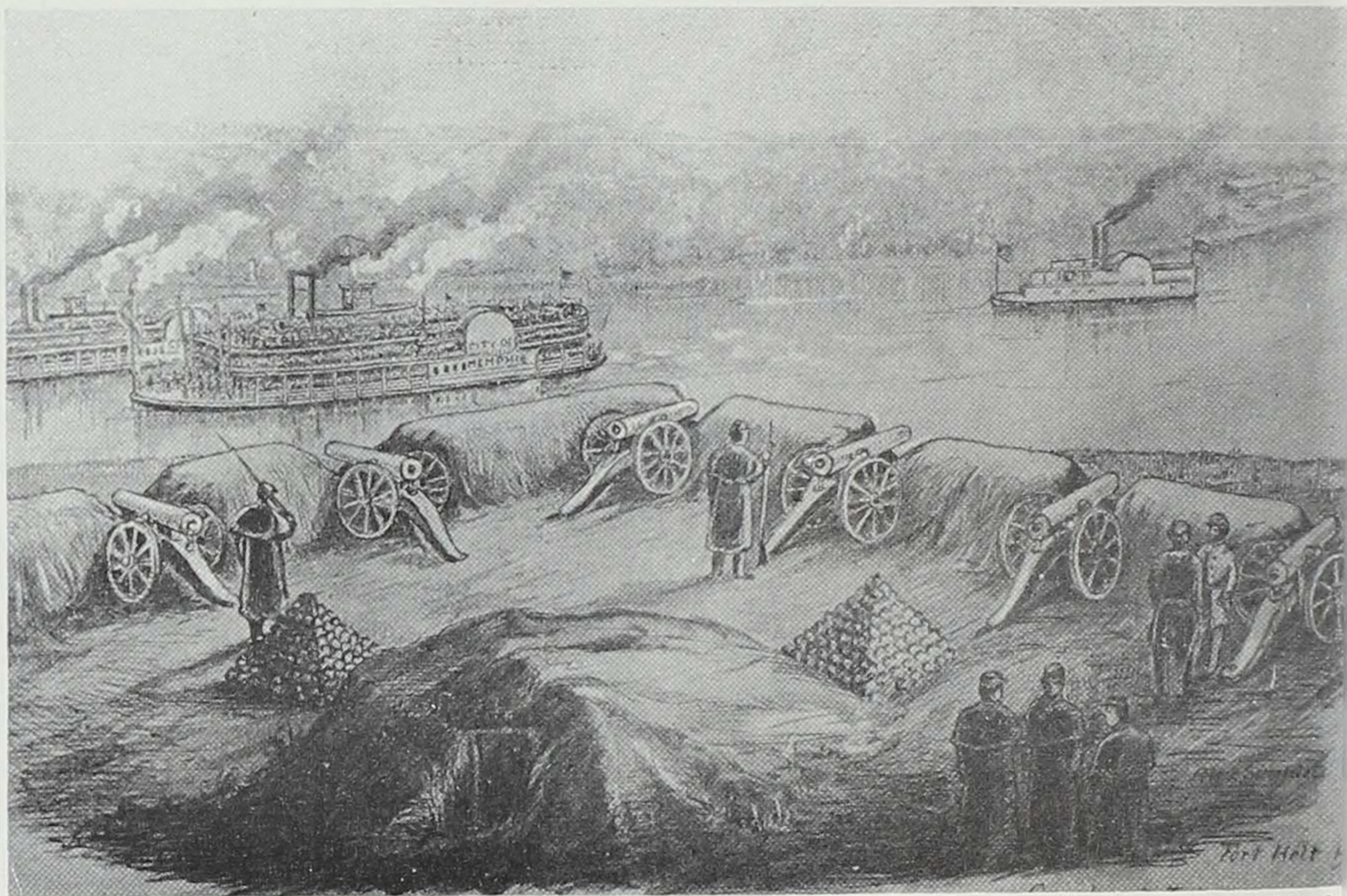
General Fremont's Camp near Jefferson City, Missouri.



Courtesy Clayton J. Metz

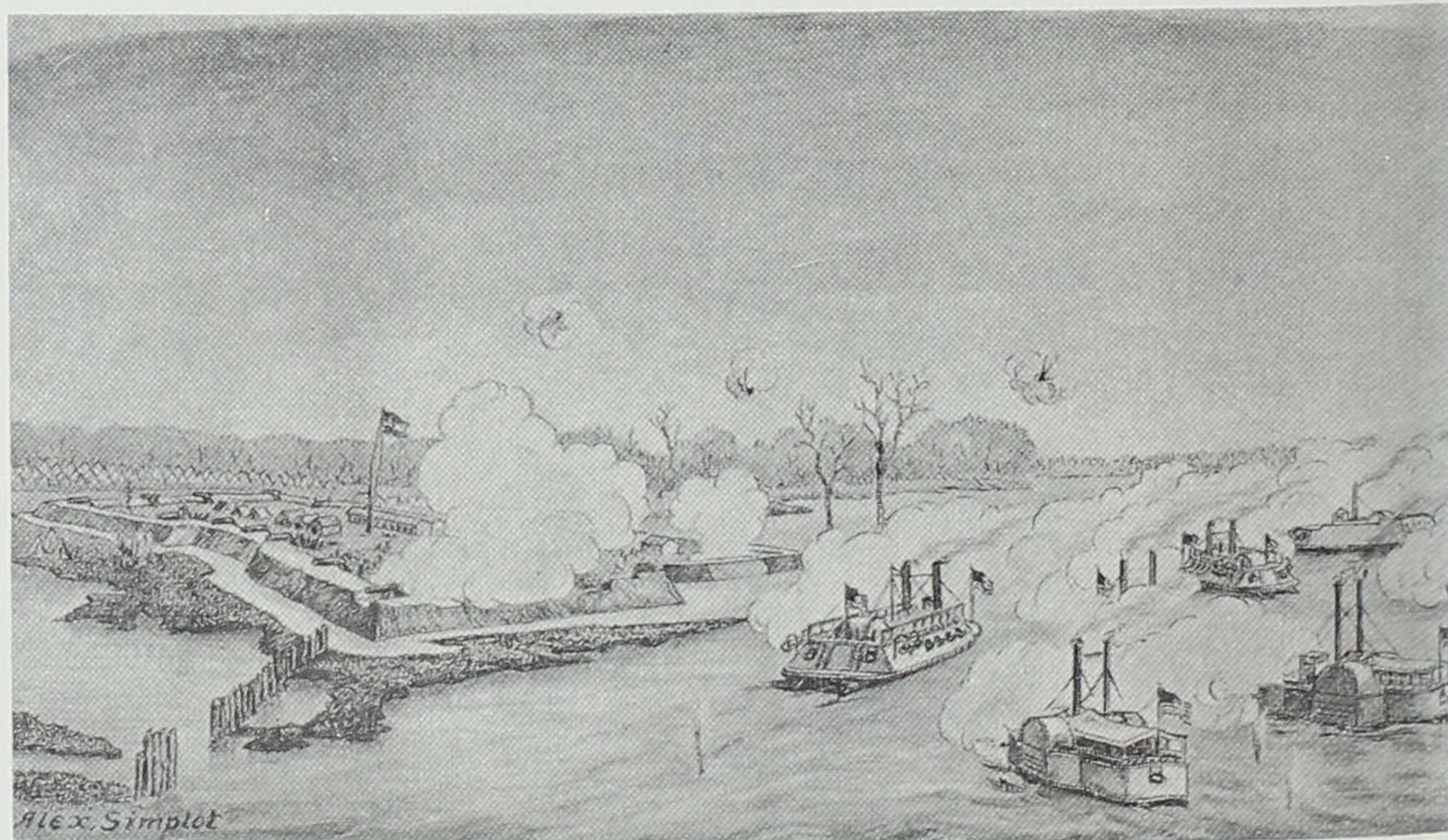
Cairo, Illinois, at High Water — March 13, 1862. Gunboat *Cincinnati* on left.





Courtesy Richard Simple

Fort Prentiss, Cairo. Transports bringing Union Troops from the North.

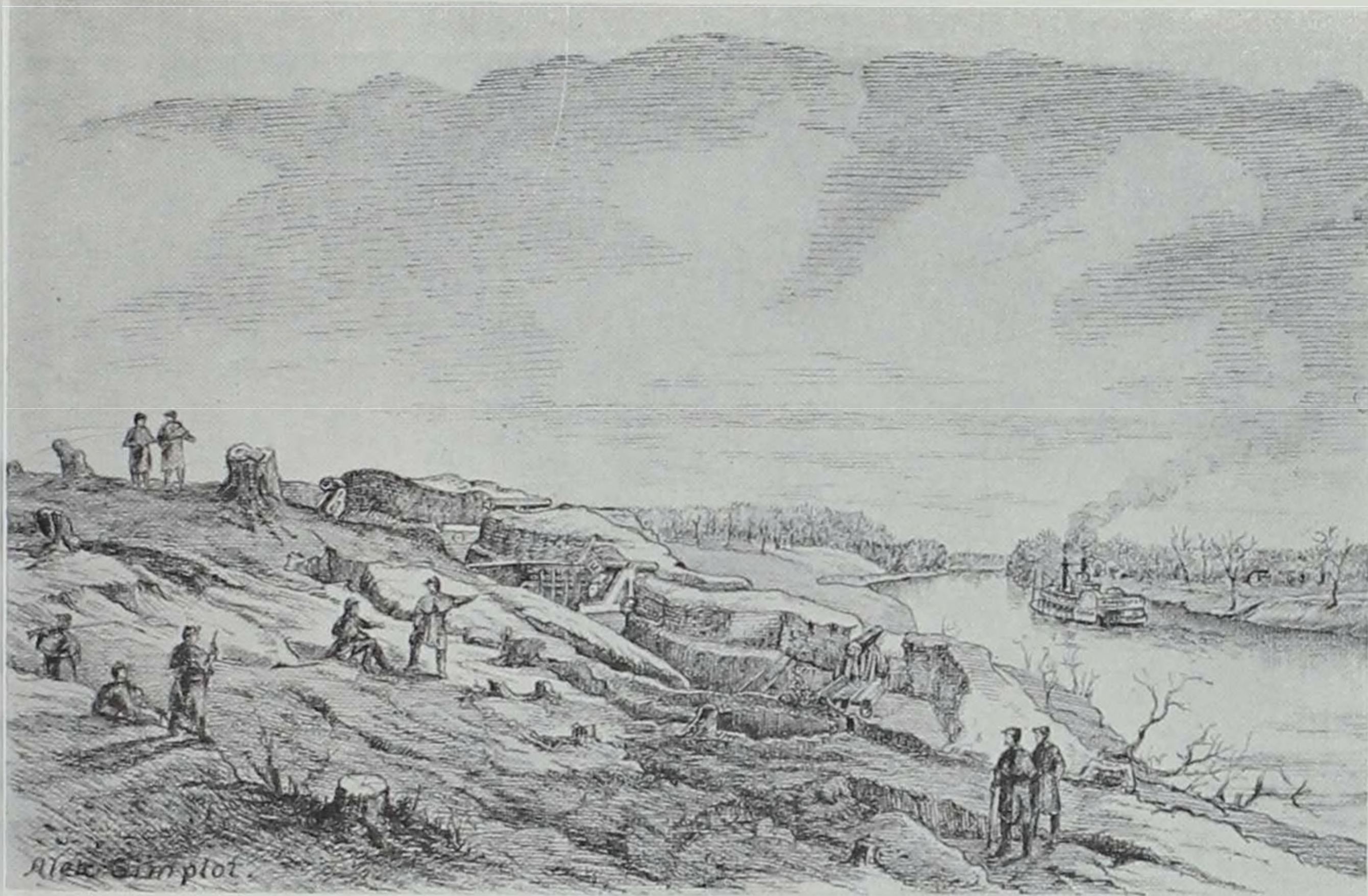


Harper's Weekly, March 1, 1862

Courtesy Clayton J. Me

Capture of Fort Henry on the Tennessee River — February 8, 1862.

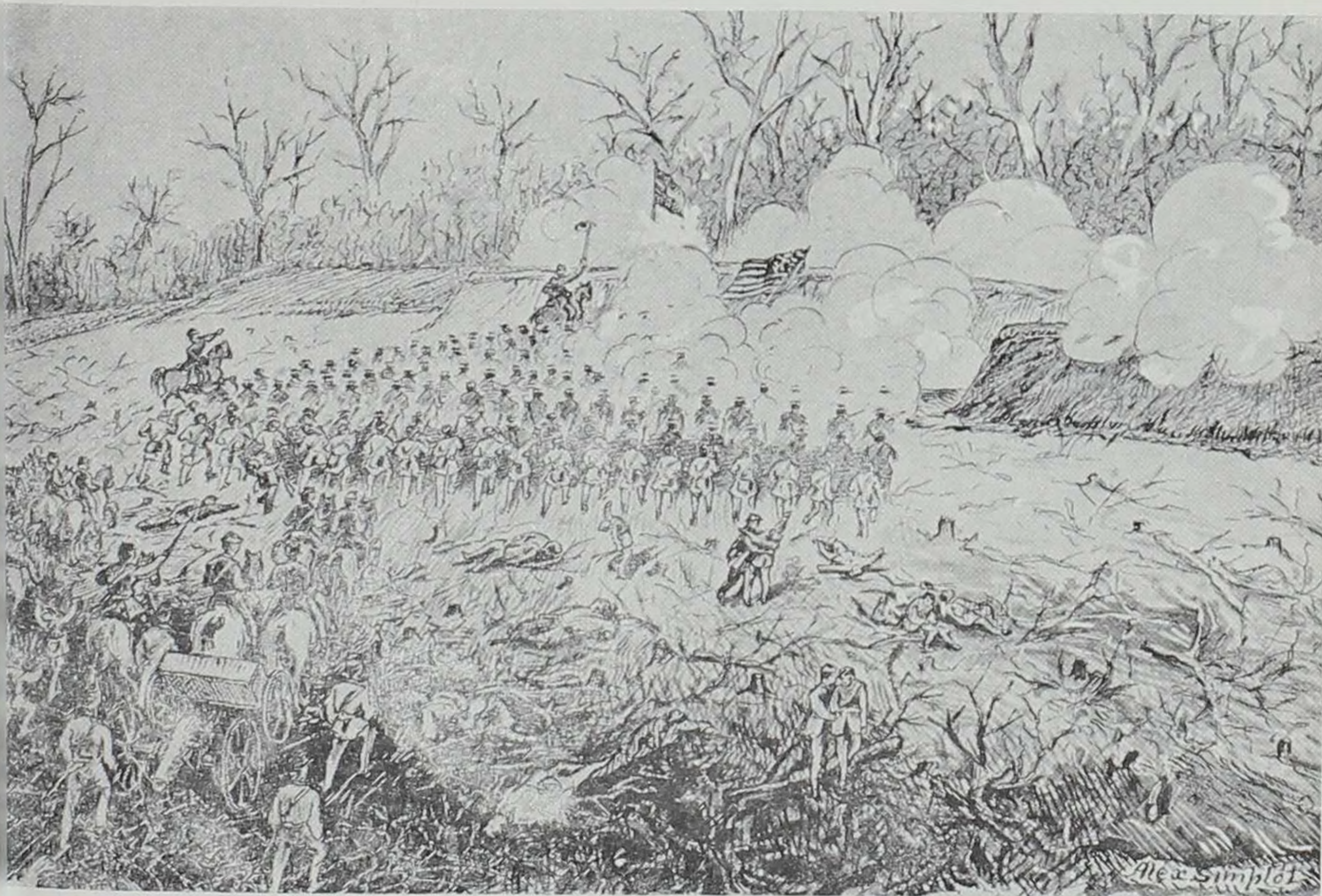




Harper's Weekly, March 22, 1862

Courtesy Clayton J. Metz

Interior View of Lower Water Batteries which Drove Back Federal Fleet at Fort Donelson.



Courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society

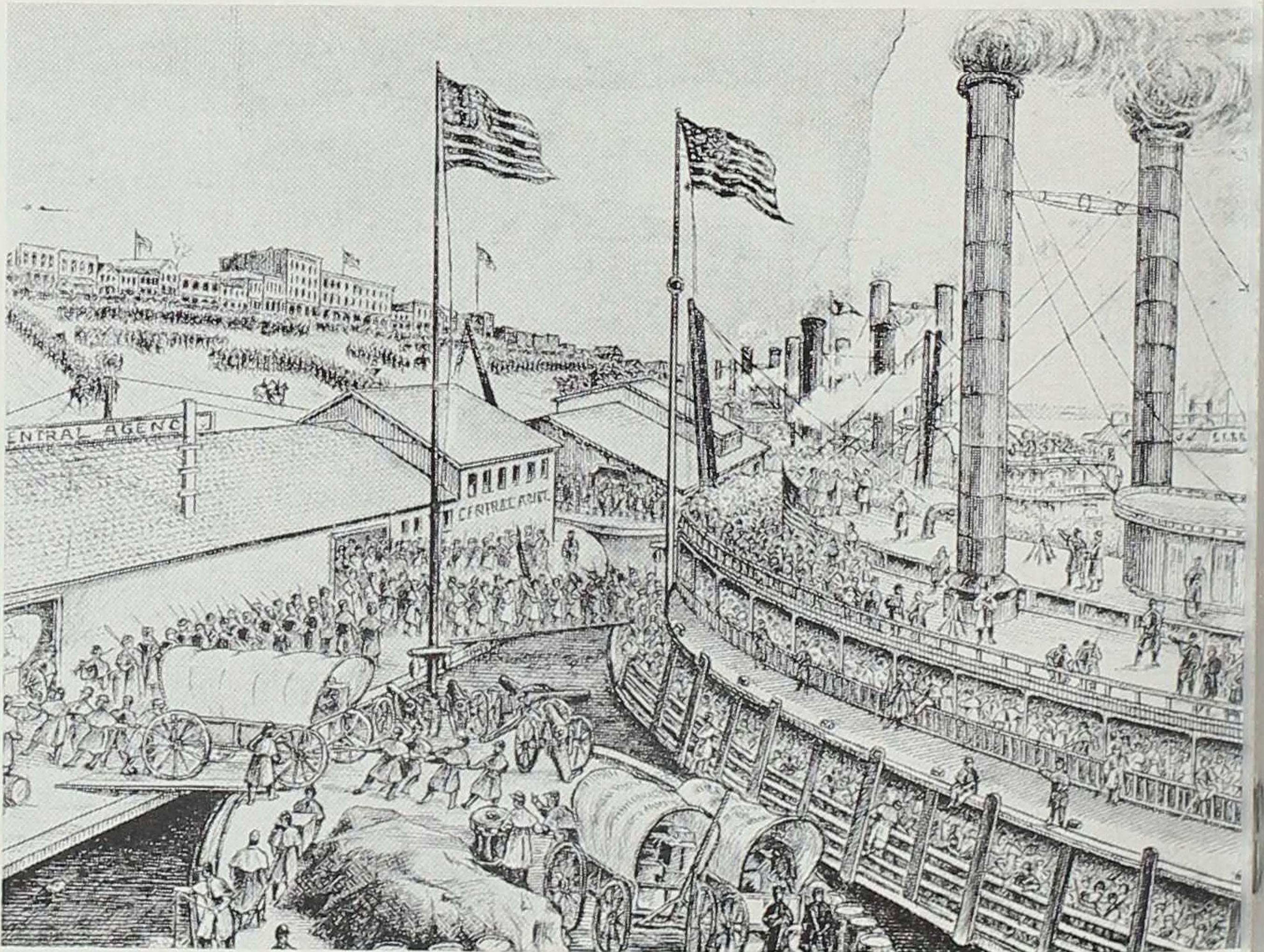
2nd and 7th Iowa attack Fort Donelson Redoubt.





Courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society,

Confederates Surprise Federal Troops at Pittsburg Landing — April 6, 1862.



Harper's Weekly, February 1, 1862

Courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society

Departure of "Great Mississippi Expedition" Downstream from Cairo.

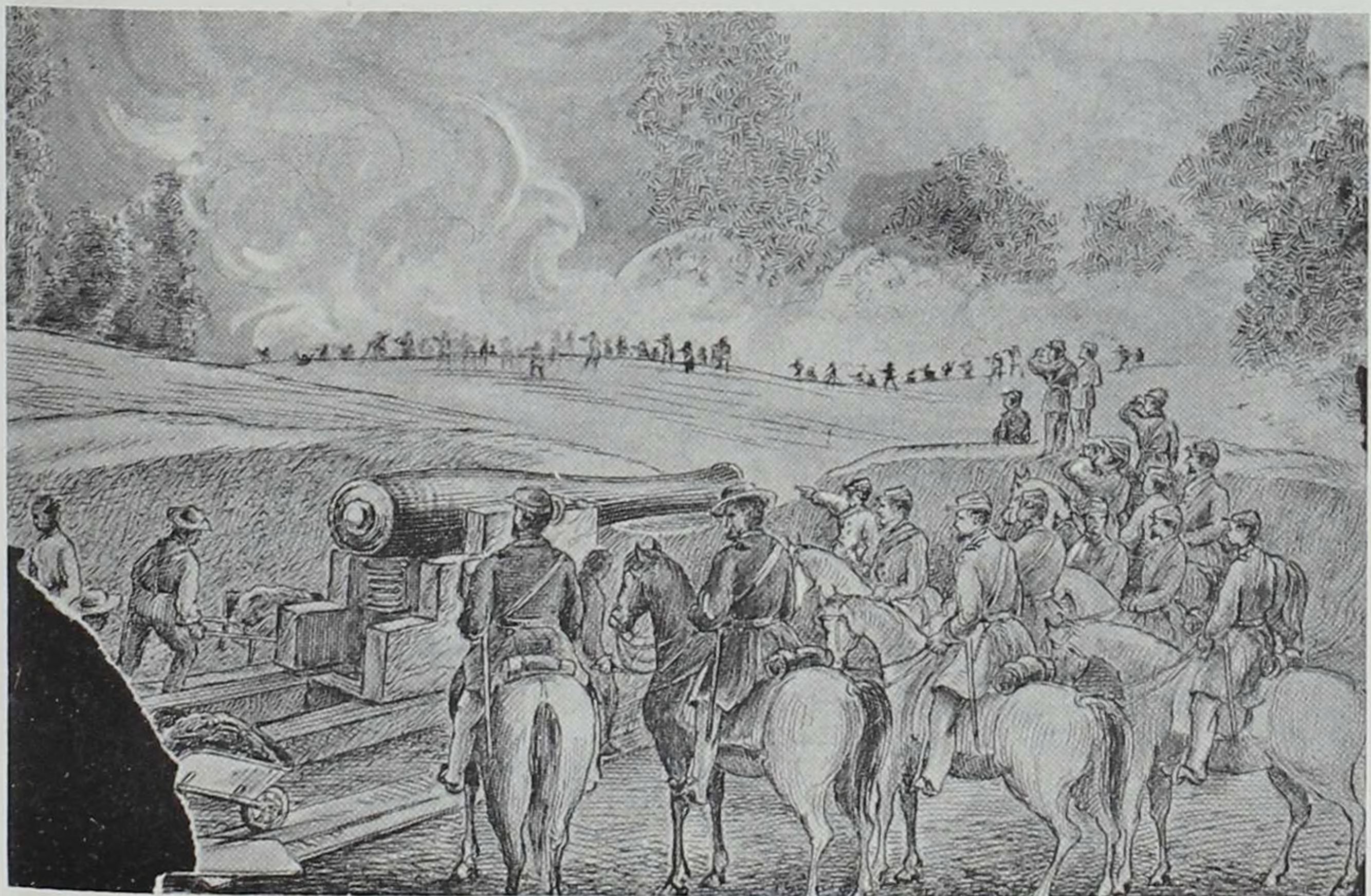




*Harper's Weekly*, June 21, 1862

Courtesy Clayton J. Metz

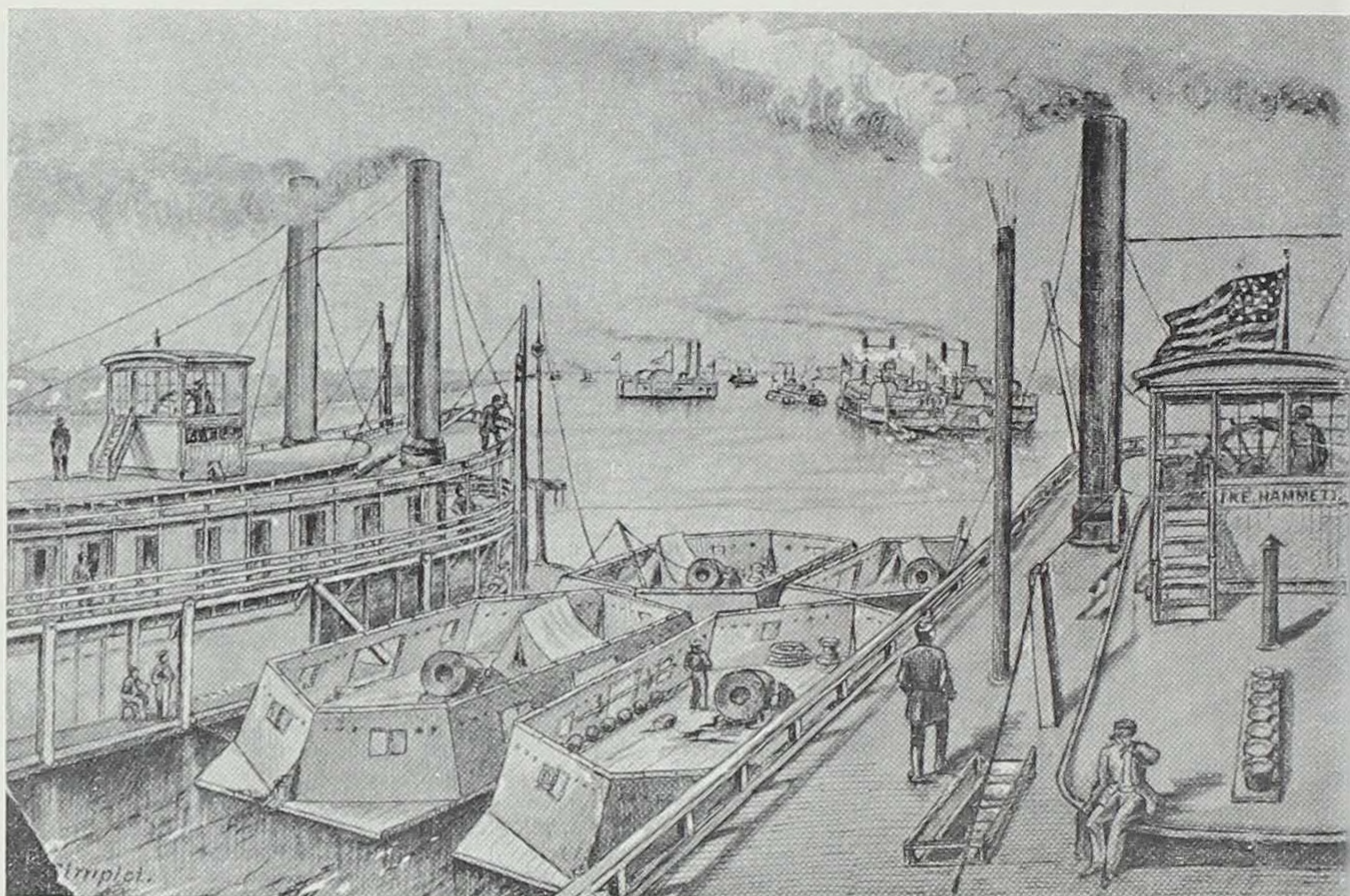
Looking into Corinth from General Pope's Observation Post.



Courtesy Mrs. Jeanne O'Hanlon

Hurriedly Erecting Earthworks During Battle at Corinth.





Harper's Weekly, April 5, 1862

Courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society

Steamboats Towing Mortar Boats, Preceded by Gunboats, to Island No. 10.



Harper's Weekly, May 3, 1862

Courtesy Clayton J. Metz

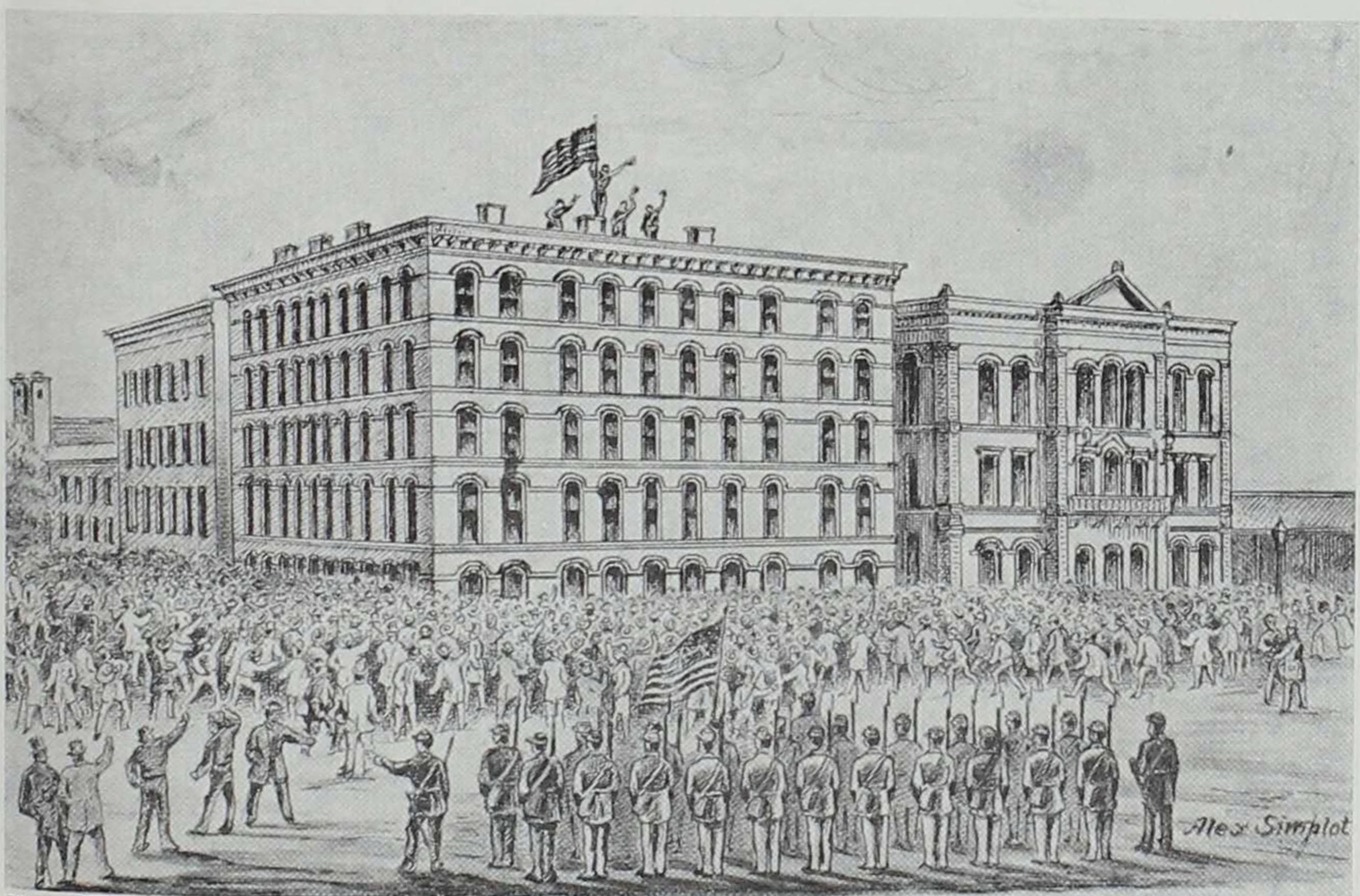
Surrender of Island No. 10 to Commodore Foote — April 7, 1862.





Courtesy Clayton J. Metz

The Great Gunboat Fight before Memphis.

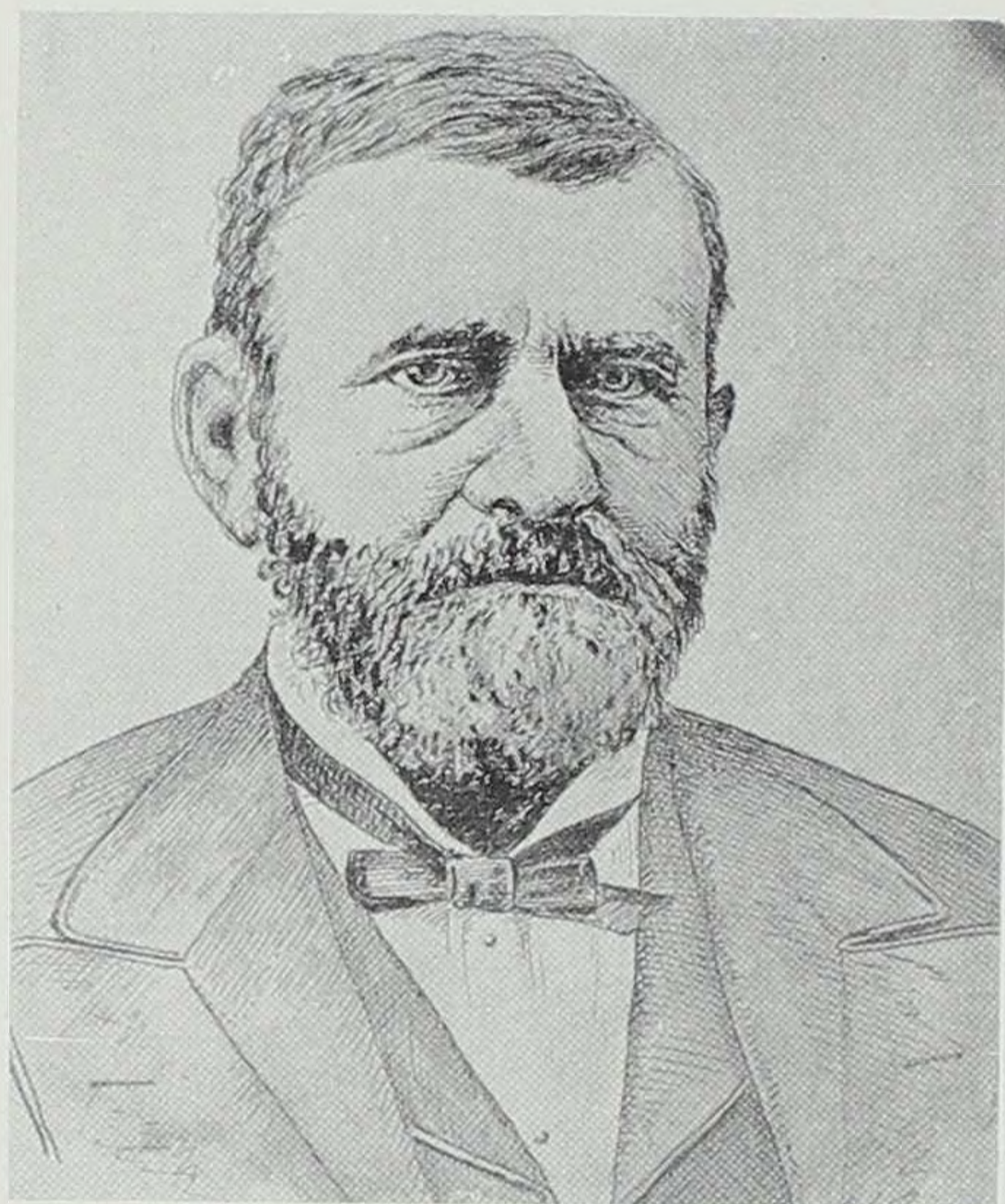


Harper's Weekly, July 5, 1862

Courtesy Mrs. Jeanne O'Hanlon

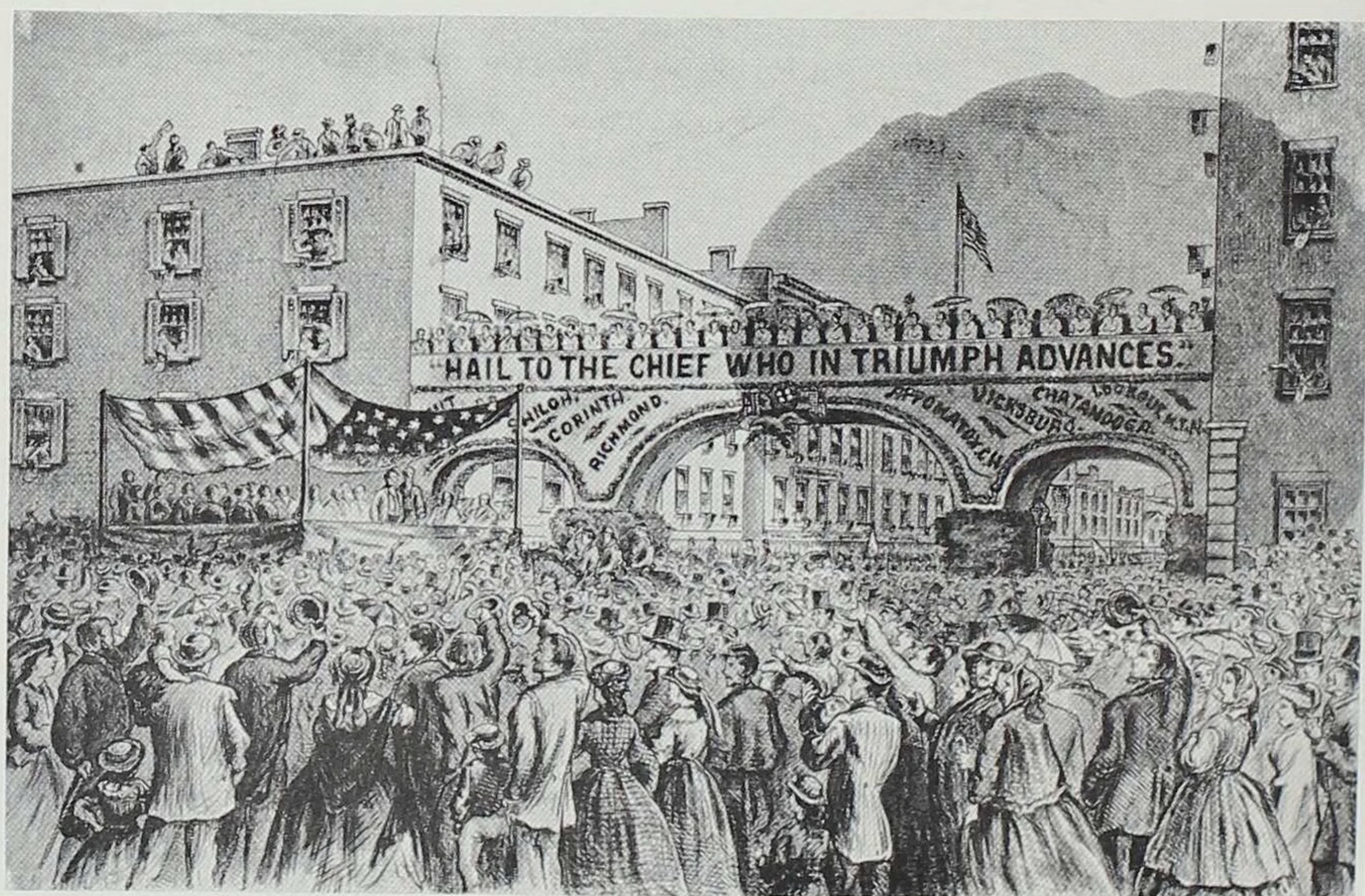
Raising the Union Flag over the Post Office at Memphis. By Alexander Simplot





Courtesy Richard Simplot

GENERAL U. S. GRANT

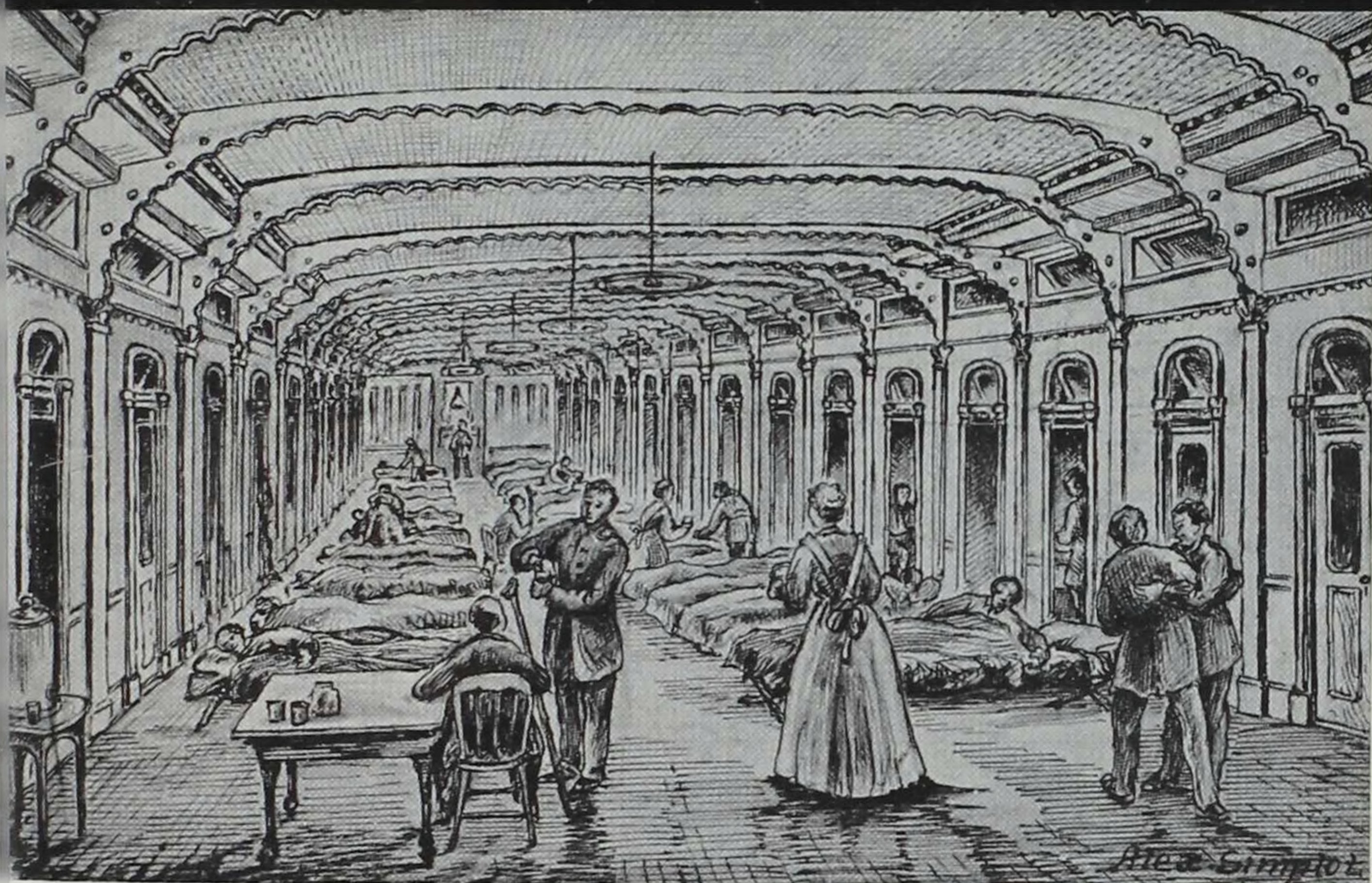


Harper's Weekly, September 9, 1865

Courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society

Citizens of Galena, Illinois, Welcome General Grant Home.





Courtesy Dubuque County Historical Society

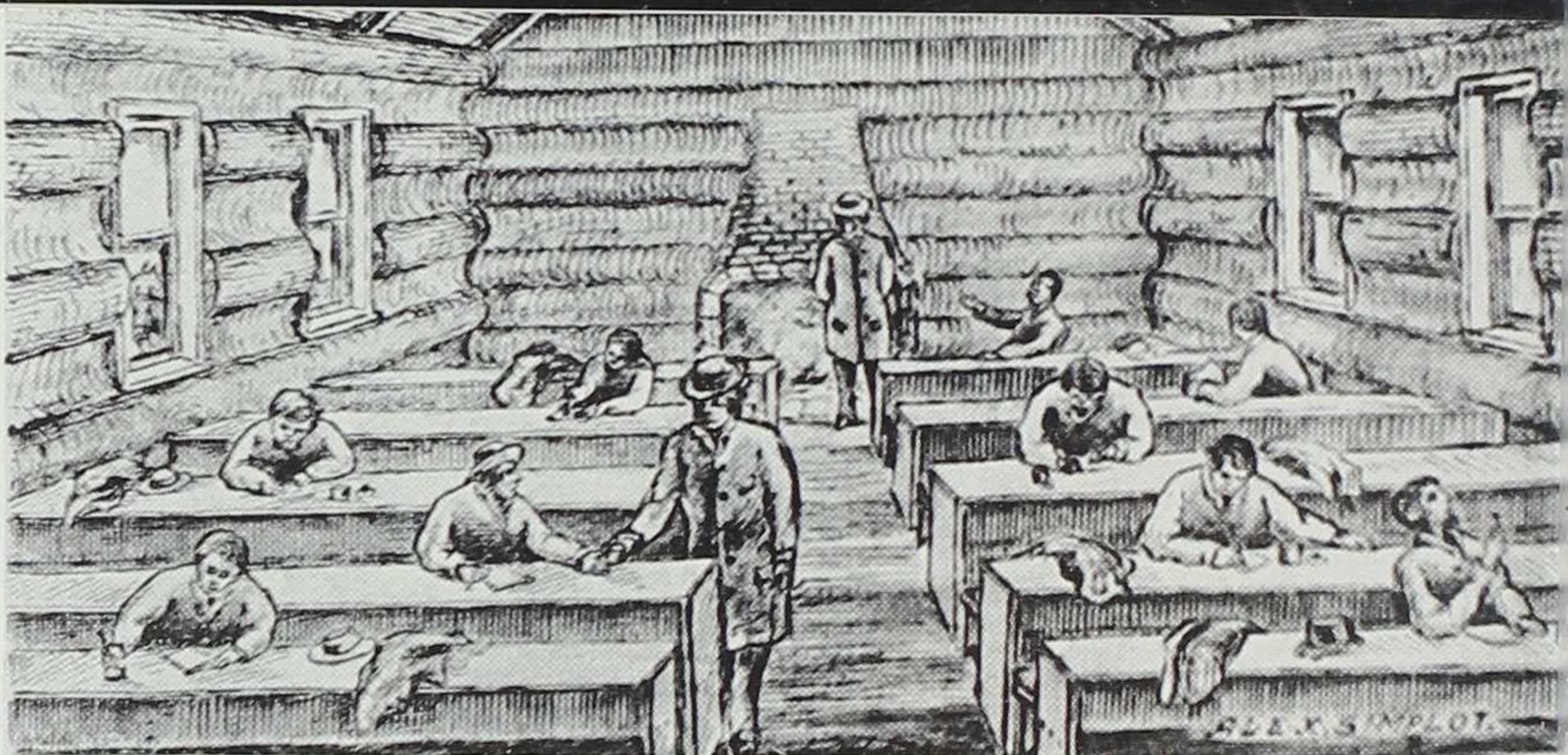
Hospital Steamboat *Imperial* Taking the Wounded Aboard After the Battle of Pittsburg Landing. Destination — St. Louis.



Courtesy Mrs. Jeanne O'Hanlon

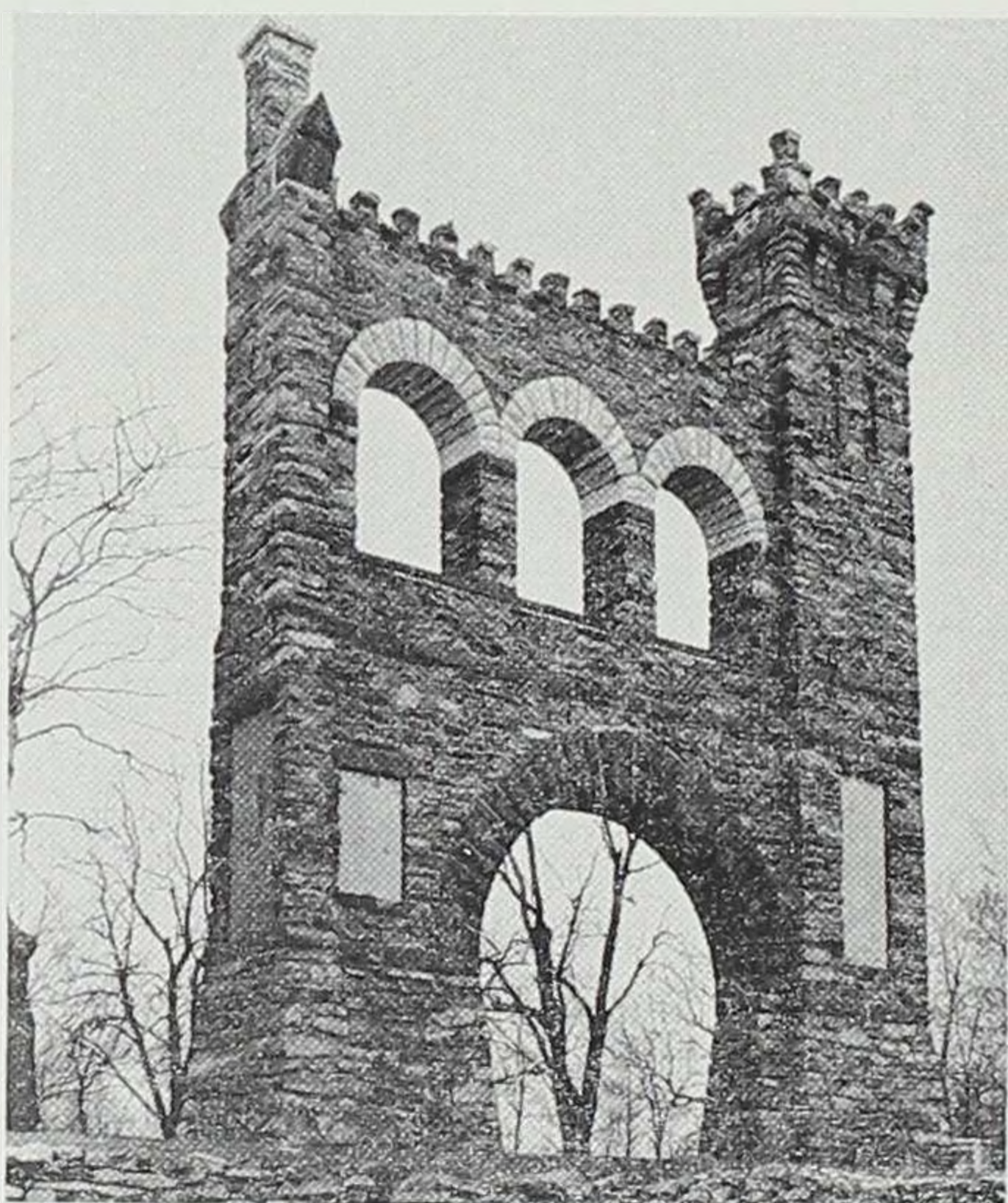
Negroes help bury dead at Fort Donelson; Simplot and War Correspondent of the *New York Herald* were the only witnesses. In the rear a Union Soldier partly consumed by a fire over which he had fallen.





Courtesy John Simplot

War Correspondents at Work in an Abandoned Missouri Schoolhouse.



Courtesy *Telegraph-Herald*

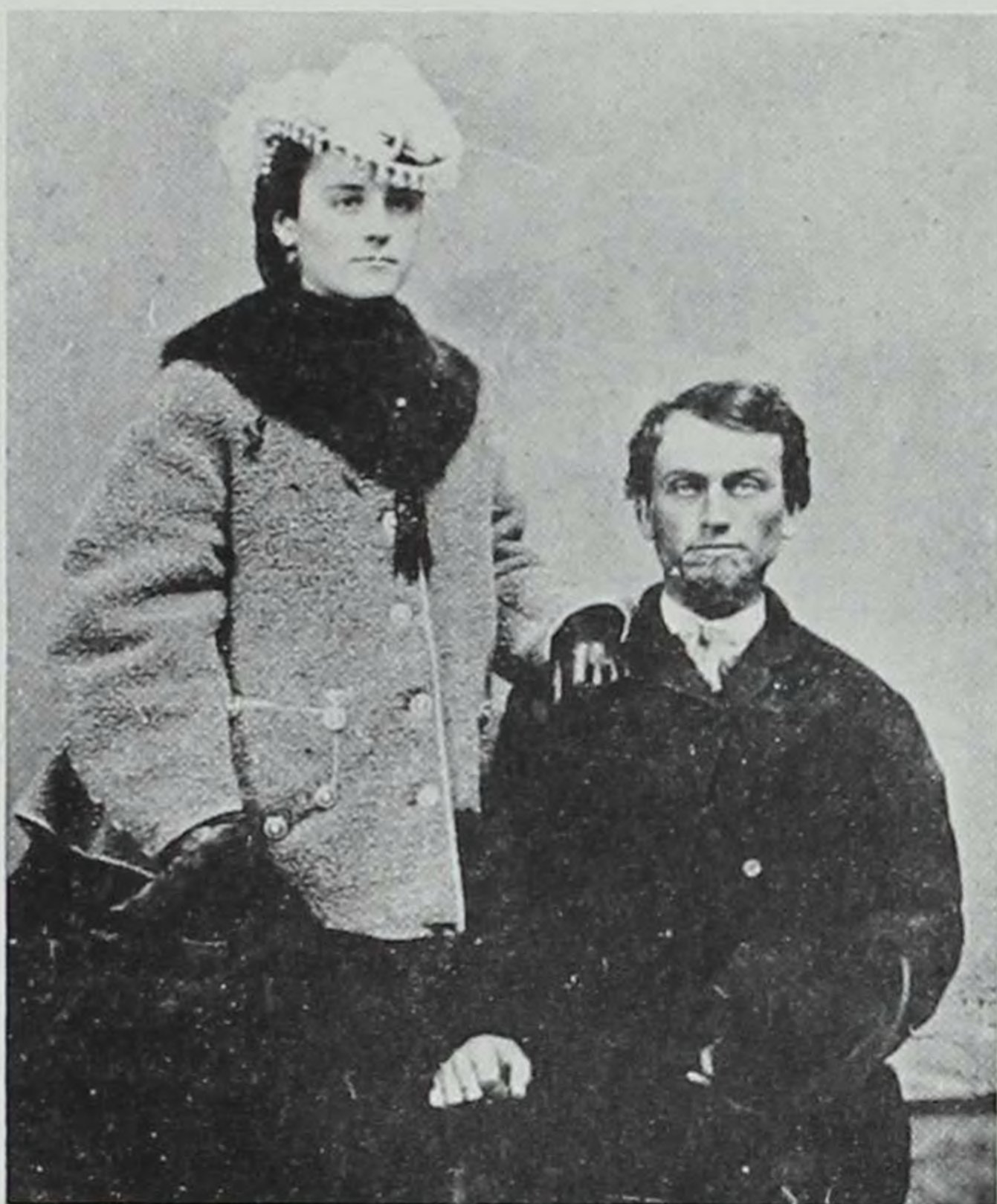
The Name of Franc B. Wilkie is inscribed on a Tablet on this Monument Erected in Memory of the Artists and War Correspondents who covered the Civil War. It is near Antietam Battlefield, at Crampton's Gap, Maryland. Simplot's name, for some unexplained reason, is not included in the list of artists.

A Rare Picture Showing Civil War Correspondents and Special Artists at Play During a Lull in the Fighting. Simplot, with back to viewer, is seen Holding a Boo after Being Hit in the Stomach with a Haversack.

Courtesy John Simplot







Alexander Simplot and his Young Bride, Virginia Knapp of Dubuque, shown after his return from the Civil War.

Courtesy Wisconsin Historical Society



Courtesy Mrs. Anna Simplot Brassell

Simplot Brothers Store at First and Main Street. Simplot made this Sketch about 1890.







Wilkie at the other, when a cannon ball passed between them, at the level of their knees, and smashed through the building. Then began a wild race down the stairway, and halfway down Wilkie was felled when another cannon shot tore through the building over his head. The wound in the back of his head was bloody, but not serious.

Oddly enough, the shots had been fired by the Union artillery. An officer had misinterpreted an order to bring the guns to "bear" on the town and had opened fire instead. In a few minutes, Wilkie had been "repaired" and was ready to continue.

There were serious problems, however, and Wilkie was quick to spot them. General Lyon had over-extended his supply lines and his requests for more men and material were not being fulfilled. Not only did the Federal troops now face a Confederate force that was larger than itself, but the Union troops were out of supplies. Wilkie wrote:

. . . Thanks to red tapeism we are just now in the worst possible condition for a conflict. Our entire available force does not exceed 6,000 men and 18 pieces of artillery. For the last fortnight the men have lived on half rations, and hence have no stomach for a fight. One or two, sometimes three crackers, two cups of coffee, with a moderate supply of beef or salt pork, make up a day's food; frequently even this is cut down to one-half. . . . As for the Iowa Regiment, they are in a complete state of demoralization, at least in all physical respects. All of the men are squalid, ragged, and filthy to the last degree.



Their clothes are in tatters to an extent that would expose them to the contempt of the raggedest crowd that ever gathered at the Five Points. Two hundred and fifty of them are utterly unfitted for travel from the want of shoes; some are entirely barefooted — others have an apology for shoes that would excite the profoundest contempt of the seediest beggar that ever hunted the gutters for bones.

The Iowans were now scheduled to be discharged within two weeks, on August 14, but before that they would prove themselves in combat. After another minor skirmish, the battle of Wilson's Creek was fought on August 10, 1861.

General Lyon, although severely out-numbered by Confederates led by General Sterling Price, chose to attack at Wilson's Creek, just southwest of Springfield, Missouri. In addition, Lyon split up his command, sending Colonel Franz Sigel and some 1,400 men to attack the enemy rear. Sigel's pincher movement failed, he was driven off, and Lyon's forces, including the Iowa First, were forced to stand the repeated attacks of the Confederate majority. Lyon used the First Missouri as his main combat force, holding the Kansas and Iowa regiments in reserve. As the battle continued, the Missouri troops stood charge after charge, then the Kansas First was called up to face the seemingly endless string of attacks. Wilkie described some of the action:

On the east side of the north ravine was a large corn-field, and in this the Secessionists threw two Regiments



with a view to turn the flanks of the Federals. Scarcely had the last files entered the field when both Batteries opened upon them with shell and canister. The distance was not more than two hundred yards and the effect was frightful; it was not simply killing men, it was a wholesale massacre. They went down not by dozens but by fifties; one single shell burst exactly in the centre of what seemed a large crowd of human beings, and the next instant not a soul could be seen in the vicinity. In a few minutes not a man of the enemy who could get away remained in the cornfield. At another time a Louisiana Regiment having a magnificent large flag came suddenly out of the woods, and began forming with great rapidity. Dubois' Artillery paid its respects to them, scattering them like chaff; the flag and bearer went down together. Another man seized it and attempted to climb over the fence with it, but as he was astride the top rail a twelve-pound struck him square in the back, and seemed to scatter him, flag and all as if a keg of gunpowder had suddenly exploded within his body.

Wilkie wrote about the death of General Lyon — a death which would raise Lyon to a position of martyr in the eyes of Union people across the nation — a brave man, sacrificed to overwhelming strength. Wilkie wrote how Lyon was first wounded in the leg, then a flesh wound in the head which bled severely. General Lyon was standing behind the Iowa Regiment color guard:

. . . "If some one will lead us, we will clear that woods with the bayonet." "I will lead you!" said he, and at the same instant a ball entered his breast, passing through his body just above the heart. He fell instantly, and a moment after reaching the ground said: "*Iowa Regiment, you are noble boys!*" A little later he grew weaker, and



his last words were: "FORWARD, MY BRAVE MEN, I WILL LEAD YOU!" He did not live a dozen seconds after being struck by the last ball.

That was the death of Lyon as Wilkie wrote it in 1861, just after the battle. It was a typical death for a soldier of that period, muttering or shouting some phrase or slogan. Just how accurate it was it is hard to say. After the Civil War, Wilkie himself was to write:

I saw many men die during the war, and in no case was there anything distressing in the occurrence. When a man was hit, and believed the wound to be a deadly one, he never grew excited nor frantic over his condition. . . I do not believe there was a single instance in the entire war in which a soldier, knowing that he was about to die, arranged any of the beautiful sentiments so frequently published in some of the newspapers and in a certain class of books. "Tell them that I have cheerfully given my life for my flag and country," is an absurd invention. No dying man ever said it, and no dying man ever thought it.

Franc Wilkie was a realist. He spared his readers no facts when writing about Wilson's Creek. He told how the Iowa Regiment was called upon to fight a rear-guard action so that the shattered Federal forces could retreat:

The Iowa Regiment suffered severely. The gallant Captain [Alexander L.] Mason, of the Color Company, (C,) while urging on his men, received a ball through the thigh, and in ten minutes thereafter was a corpse. His First Lieutenant [William] Purcell, received a mortal wound. Three others of the company were killed in their



tracks, and some ten others wounded, but through all, the Colors never for a single moment kissed the dust, and when the Regiment covered the retreat of the dispirited forces, they still fluttered proudly as ever in the smoke of the battlefield. Poor McHenry, of Company I, rose incautiously on his knee to cap his musket, but had scarcely done so ere a musket ball tore through his head scattering his blood and brains upon his comrades on either side of him. He was dead ere he reached the ground. At one time the company lay upon the ground to avoid a deadly shower of bullets from a point not fifty yards distant. They were ordered to rise and charge upon the cover and drive out the enemy. "Come on, boys," cried George Pierce of the Governor's Greys, springing to his feet and fearlessly facing the storm, "Come on, boys, and let us chase them out!" At that instant a fine looking officer mounted on a magnificent sorrel charger, galloped out in front of the enemy and appeared to urge them to charge. Pierce drew a bead on him with his musket and fired — the officer tumbled like a log from his horse, and almost at the same instant George dropped, shot through the thigh. Sergeant Dettmer, of the Jackson Guards, fell severely wounded, and the handsome Frank Rhomberg, a Private in the same company, fell dead, pierced through the brain.

The courage of the Iowa Volunteers was marked by those in command. In a conversation with Wilkie after Wilson's Creek, Major Sturgis declared:

Your fellows fought like devils, and if any man after this ever says to me that Volunteers won't fight, I'll make it a personal matter with him! Yes, sir, your men fought just like devils!"

I am full in the belief that these emphatic compliments



to the Volunteers, and particularly to the Iowa Regiment, were well earned by the gallant men to whom they were paid. To be sure a few men from each company sneaked from the fight, but there must be cowards of necessity in so large a crowd. The shooting of the enemy with small arms was universally low; they aimed to wound and not to kill, probably knowing that every wounded man required two others to carry him to the rear, thus weakening the force much more than by killing men outright.

By three that afternoon, both forces had retired from the field. The Federals had received a resounding defeat. But the Iowa First had only 11 killed and three missing in its first and only battle. Wilkie stayed with Lyon's battered troops until two the next morning, compiling a complete list of the wounded and dead Iowans. His list not only told who was wounded, but where the bullet had entered and how serious the injury was. When the lists were compiled on Sunday morning, Wilkie and Thomas Knox of the *New York Herald* set out for Rolla, Missouri, the nearest telegraph connection. The route from Springfield to Rolla was through the foothills of the Ozark Mountains and through territory full of Secessionists. On that first night they reached Lebanon, Missouri, and fell dead asleep in the cabin of a Secessionist who put them up for the night. The first day's ride had covered 70 miles, and Wilkie had had no sleep in the preceding 72 hours. He later wrote:

. . . The physical agonies of that day were something



that I shall never forget. Every joint and muscle quivered with pain at each motion of the animal which I rode. I was "dying for sleep" and fell into deep slumber a thousand times, only to be awakened as often by the pain from the jolting motion.

The next day, Monday, the reporters reached Rolla, and Wilkie succeeded in getting the first news of the battle telegraphed back to Dubuque. Then he pushed on to St. Louis. Events there were to lead to an Iowa newspaper "scooping" the country on the first major western battle of the Civil War.

Franc Wilkie was both the western war correspondent of the *Dubuque Herald* and the *New York Times*. When he got to St. Louis, he had expected no money from the *Herald* — they had never sent him a penny — but he discovered that there was also no money or word from the *Times*. Enraged, he decided to give the complete story to the Dubuque paper, since it would at least be interested in how the local boys had done. He took the train for Dubuque and when he landed across the river at East Dubuque (then Dunleith) and took the ferry boat across the Mississippi, he was much surprised by his reception:

. . . We landed, and I went ashore without having seen a soul that I knew, and then started up the narrow street. It was dark as a pocket, and I had no apprehension of being known, at least before reaching Main Street. I had not gone a hundred yards when I heard a rush of feet and a clamor of voices approaching me on the levee. In a mo-



ment or two three or four people met me, clasped my hands, congratulating me on my safe return, and began asking for news from the "boys." Meanwhile, other rushing feet were heard; and almost in less time than I can tell it, the levee was swarming with an eager, tumultuous crowd. As we advanced toward the main street the throng increased, and by the time we entered on the gas-lighted region the mass of people crowded the street from curb to curb in a crush that was terrific.

Inch by inch I pushed up the street, being shaken by the hand, and answering a thousand times the question — "How did you leave the 'boys'?" "Where are they?" "When will they be at home?" and "Did you see So-and-So?" and so on without limit. It would have taken me ten minutes to have reached my home, if uninterrupted; as it was, I finally gained shelter at half-past two the next morning. My right hand was wrung out of all shape, and I suffered for days untold pain in my arms and shoulders.

Wilkie's complete story of the battle and the death of General Lyon was printed in the *Dubuque Herald*, which thereby scooped the nation's press. The *New York Times* was panic-stricken by its oversight in not paying more attention to the reporter from Iowa. They wired, "Retain place, by all means" and money was soon on the way. The Iowa First was mustered out of the service on August 21, 1861, in St. Louis, but Franc Wilkie would soon be heading back to the wars.

Franc Wilkie was soon assigned to go to St. Louis where Major General John Charles Fremont was preparing to launch an attack. Fremont's reputation was staggering. He was known as the



"Pathfinder of the West" for his explorations with Kit Carson, had been a United States Senator from California, and the Republican party's first candidate for president, although he lost the election to James Buchanan in 1856. Now he was in command of the Department of the West. But things had not been going well and Wilkie was soon to be present at another Union defeat. From General Sam Sturgis, a friend from the battle of Wilson's Creek, Wilkie learned that Sturgis was about to lead a relief column to save Federal forces encircled by Confederate General Sterling Price at Lexington, Missouri. There was just time enough for Sturgis to buy Wilkie a drink, then they were off. A column of artillery and other troops scheduled to join with Sturgis, never materialized and the Union commander soon came to realize that he had only 1,200 men, none of whom had ever been in battle. Wilkie wrote:

Sturgis had a horse, and I had a mule. We were the only mounted men in an expedition having for its object the penetration of an unknown and hostile country, and the rout or capture of 20,000 rebels.

At last Sturgis decided that he could not attack the Confederate forces that encircled Lexington, and headed on to Kansas City. But newspaper correspondent Franc Wilkie decided that he could attack. Mounted on a horse provided by a Confederate who lived in the area, Wilkie went "howling" down the road toward Lexington. His cour-



age was somewhat bolstered, however, by his drinking.

Nearly or quite two quarts of champagne were boiling through my brain, whose result was a desire to gallop like the wind, and to yell like the devil at intervals of about ten seconds.

No one was more surprised than Confederate General Price when Wilkie appeared and announced, "I have come voluntarily to your camp, trusting to your well-known chivalry, and relying upon my character as a member of a non-combatant profession."

Price felt certain that Wilkie was a spy. But one of the General's officers recognized Wilkie's name.

"Were you at the battle of Wilson's Creek?"

"Yes."

"Did you write the account of the battle which was copied afterward in the St. Louis Republican?"

"I did."

The officer turned to General Price.

"General, I will say this much for the gentleman. That account was a particularly fair one, and seemed to be written by a man disposed to do justice to both sides."

And so Franc Wilkie was not hanged as a spy. He was taken in charge and led throughout the lines so that he could observe the battle. For once he was in front, instead of behind, Federal bullets.



When the Union troops finally were forced to surrender, Wilkie was given a horse and safe conduct back through the lines to St. Louis. His account of the battle, from the Confederate side, was a sensation in the New York papers. The *Times* called his exploits "unparalleled in the history of journalism" and his pay was raised to \$30 a week, plus all expenses. His wife received a present of \$25 from the *Times*. And Franc Wilkie, the country boy from Iowa, was put in charge of covering the war in the West.

After the defeats at Wilson's Creek and Lexington, General Fremont was frantic and decided to take the field himself and drive his army straight through to New Orleans. His first problem, however, would be to find and defeat the illusive and wily General Price. This, in his famous march of 100 days, Fremont failed to do and was eventually removed from command by President Lincoln.

When Wilkie arrived at Jefferson City, Missouri, where Fremont was gathering his army, he found a large group of reporters and artists awaiting the coming "action." Among them was Alexander Simplot, the former Dubuque schoolteacher who had been sketching for *Harper's Weekly*. The correspondents, who had nothing whatever to report, dubbed themselves the "Bohemian Brigade" because of their gay carefree life. On the entire 500-mile march there was no major battle to



report and the artists and writers were taken good care of by Fremont's staff.

A Lieutenant Morrissey was placed in charge of the correspondents and Simplot said that the newsmen and artists were known as "Morrissey's Mess." Writing after the war, Simplot described how each day's ride ended on that march:

On the eve of each night's encampment, after our ride of eight or ten miles a day, we found our tent up, occupying the righthand side, second to the end of the headquarters camp, a load of hay or straw having been dumped in the central open space, from which our "contraband" (negro) toward evening generously strewed sufficient to form a bedding upon which, with the aid of a few blankets, to rest the pencil shovers' weary bones.

Although there was little for Wilkie to write about on the march of 15,000 men, there was plenty for Simplot to sketch and the pages of *Harper's* were filled with drawings of men marching, crossing streams, making camp, and engaging in all military activities except fighting. Franc Wilkie wrote:

In every essential respect the campaign of Fremont is the greatest humbug and farce in history. Weeks were taken up in preparation to meet an enemy at a certain point many miles distant who had no existence. . . . The entire operation was a gigantic picnic, whose main qualities were display, vanity, ostentation, demoralization, and all sorts of rascally developments.

Simplot and Wilkie soon found that there was



some excitement. One night they listened in horror while their old friend General Sturgis called General Jim Lane of Kansas an "assassin, a thief, a scoundrel of the vilest description." It was all said over peach brandy and Lane, a crude Kansan who had ravaged the Missouri countryside in the name of the Union, took it good-naturedly. The peach brandy finally ended the argument and Simplot and Wilkie had to see to it that the two generals got back to their quarters.

The next night, seated in an abandoned log cabin, Sturgis suggested a game of draw poker. Simplot "responded meekly that he never played any game for money." Wilkie said he was willing to learn, but that he had no money. The General loaned him a ten-dollar piece and the game began. Wilkie, perhaps on "beginner's luck," won.

. . . I won so fast that I was ashamed of it, and surreptitiously passed the most of my gains to Simplot. After the breaking up of the game Simplot disgorged about seventy dollars. I believed myself the greatest poker-player of the ages.

Subsequent evenings of poker playing proved that this was not true. During the march, the only major "battles" were the horseplay among the writers and artists. When the army finally reached Springfield, Missouri, it fought a minor action against the rear guard of the Confederates. Fremont's 100 days were over and he was removed from command.



## War on the Rivers

During the winter of 1861-62, the Civil War in the West changed rapidly. There was no more marching across the dusty plains and hills of Missouri; the scene of action switched to the rivers. Both Alexander Simplot and Franc Wilkie headed for Cairo, Illinois, at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. A good system of roads and railways made Cairo the "jumping off" place for any invasion of the South. Wilkie liked the idea of watching a battle from a steamboat. He was tired of trudging across Missouri on the back of a mule:

It was for me the beginning of an aquatic career which was immensely desirable in that it involved no saddle contusions, nor any of the annoyances connected with equestrian expeditions.

The shift in scene of battle was also good news for Alexander Simplot. The river was something he knew about and steamboats were something that he loved to draw. He could draw and tell the readers of *Harper's Weekly* about the strange type of boats which would soon be so prominent in the war. In a short article accompanying one of his sketches, he described how mortar boats were being constructed:



The boats are practically rafts, consisting of three or four layers of heavy timbers laid crosswise of each other, which, when supplied with their armament — a massive mortar, throwing a 10-inch shell weighing 200 pounds — were but slightly elevated above the water. Boiler iron, with port holes and embrasures to afford means of defense in case of attack, about eight feet in height, surrounded the upper part of the float for the protection of the crew. A covered opening in the floor of the float answered the purposes of a magazine, while the 10-inch shells lay conveniently within range.

But while the Federal troops were waiting to board their boats for the attack, there was actually very little for the correspondents and artists to do. Hordes of newspapermen were gathering to prepare to report the upcoming battles. For Franc Wilkie, this was a source of irritation. He wrote:

. . . You meet newspaper men at every step; they block up the approaches to headquarters; one of them is attached to the button of every officer; they are constantly demanding passes, horses, saddles, blankets, news, copies of official papers, a look into private correspondence, and things whose use and extent are only appreciated by omniscience.

And there was a new commander now. General Ulysses S. Grant of Galena, Illinois, was to be in charge of the operation. Simplot had an "in." The Iowan had a letter of introduction to Grant from the General's former employer in a tannery business in Galena, and better than that, Simplot had been a classmate of Capt. John Rawlins of Galena, who was now Grant's adjutant general. Simplot



and Rawlins had both attended Rock River Seminary at Mt. Morris, Illinois. As soon as he arrived at Cairo, Simplot went to call at Grant's headquarters:

This was established in the second story of a three-story building fronting the levee and showed a series of unpainted desks and benches in a long store room. I found General Grant and Captain Rawlins both in, and on the presentation of my letter and recalling myself to the captain was pleasantly received. . .

Franc Wilkie was not introduced to General Grant so formally:

The first time I ever saw Grant was in an expedition out of Cairo, during which, in a narrow and muddy road in a swamp, I was nearly run over and very badly mud-splashed by a short man with a stoop in his shoulders, who rode by me like a hurricane, followed by an escort of cavalry. I was finally introduced to him by his adjutant-general, John A. Rawlins . . . At the introduction Grant shook my hand heartily, pulled on the stump of an immense cigar, and said nothing.

Wilkie remarked that Grant was a man of few words and claimed that in the two years in which he campaigned with Grant, the General never once said a single word to him, although they were in close contact.

Simplot drew a picture of Grant, perhaps one of the few done of the General during the Civil War, but it remained for Franc Wilkie to give a vivid word description of Grant. Later, in June of 1863,



while Grant's forces were beseiging Vicksburg, Wilkie wrote:

Almost at any time one can see a small but compactly built man, of about forty-five years of age, walking through the camps. He moves with his shoulders thrown a little in front of the perpendicular, his left hand in the pocket of his trousers, an unlighted cigar in his mouth, his eyes thrown straight forward, which, from the haze of abstraction which veils them, and a countenance ploughed into furrows of thought, would seem to indicate that he is intensely preoccupied. The soldiers observe him coming, and rising to their feet, gather on each side of the way to see him pass; they do not salute him, they only watch him curiously, with a certain sort of reverence. . . A plain blue suit without scarf, sword, or trappings of any sort, save the double-starred shoulderstraps, an indifferently good Kossuth hat, or slouch, with the crown battered in close to his head, full beard between light and "sandy," a square-cut face whose lines and contour indicate extreme endurance and determination, complete the external appearance of this small man, as one sees him passing along, turning and chewing restlessly the end of his unlighted cigar. On horseback he loses all the awkwardness which distinguishes him as he moves about on foot. Erect and graceful, he seems a portion of his steed, without which the full effect would be incomplete.

The plan of the Union forces called for gaining control of the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, and to do this it was necessary for Grant and Commodore Andrew Foote, the flag officer in charge of the Mississippi squadron, to capture two Confederate strongholds — Fort Henry on the



Tennessee and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland.

For the attack on Fort Henry, the first step, both Simplot and Wilkie elected to go with the river forces. It turned out to be a wise choice. Early that February, Union troops were moved up to below Fort Henry and the gunboats began their attack. Before the foot soldiers could even move in to attack, Fort Henry surrendered to the gunboats on February 6. In touring the captured fort, Wilkie noticed that the Federal mortar boats had sent in shells that penetrated a distance of 24 feet through earthworks. Simplot made several excellent sketches of the bombardment. When he toured the fort and saw the prisoners, he had another surprise:

Among the fifty-six prisoners captured with the fort were two old school mates from my home in Iowa (Dubuque), whose sympathies for the rebel cause led them to fight in its service.

Fort Henry was to provide another surprising item. When Franc Wilkie was poking through the wreckage, something caught his eye. It was a violin which belonged to George Jones, one of the sons of George Wallace Jones of Dubuque, one of Iowa's first two United States Senators. The young man had fled to the South at the outbreak of the war. His father agreed with the young man's views and said he would join the South "if required to fight at all." Later, Franc Wilkie would make another startling discovery on an-



other battlefield about another son of George Wallace Jones.

Most of the Confederates at Fort Henry had left before the Union attack began and were now firmly entrenched at Fort Donelson. Taking Donelson would not be such an easy task. Once again, Commodore Foote's gunboats were sent into action, but the heavy guns of Fort Donelson treated them roughly and the battle was left to the ground troops. Grant moved his forces up and the sharpshooters on both sides began to go into action. The Confederates were firmly entrenched and the attacking Federal forces found that there were plenty of trees to hide behind. Franc Wilkie couldn't resist taking part in what he called the "exchange of compliments."

I tried my hand at the target practice. Something like one hundred and fifty yards in front was a little mound of earth revealing a rifle-pit, with the customary logs on its top. From this point there came frequent bullets, none of which ever went very wide of the mark. I selected a large tree, and crouching close to its roots I drew a bead on the little opening in the log, and began blazing away at the smoke when it appeared. This lasted for a few minutes, when suddenly there was a quick reply to my shot which struck the bark of the tree about three feet over my head. I fired again a little later, and instantly got a response which cut the bark some six inches lower than the other. A third bullet from the Confederate dropped within a foot of my head, and thereupon I withdrew. I saw that he was slowly getting my range, and that the next bullet, or the second one, for certain, would go through my head.



After a vigorous battle, the Confederates surrendered and the North went crazy with joy. Two Confederate generals and 12,000 troops had been captured, and Grant's famous demand of "unconditional surrender" caught the imagination of the North. From then on, he was "Unconditional Grant." Simplot had stayed too long at Fort Henry and missed the action at Donelson, but he arrived on the day of the surrender and was able to recreate sketches of the battle scene, Grant's headquarters, and the hospital. Such practices were not uncommon for the "Special Artists" who seldom had advance warning of what battle was going to be important and what battle was going to be a minor skirmish.

Wilkie and Simplot both returned to Dubuque for a short vacation after the fall of Donelson, but in March of 1862 they were back on the river, this time at Island No. 10, a now non-existent 2 1/2 mile long island in a loop of the Mississippi River just below the Missouri border in Tennessee. There was little excitement, seven iron-plated gunboats and a fleet of barges mounted with mortars lay siege to the island and a month-long duel between the boats and the batteries began. Both Wilkie and Simplot were able to watch the barges from the comfort of a boat deck. Wilkie later recalled:

The correspondents had a fine view of the frequent duels between the gunboats and the batteries. There was



a stretch of river straight and unbroken for miles above the defenses, and along this the fleet was extended. From any one of the gunboats, one could see every shot fired from the Confederate guns, and watch the approach of the missiles as they curved through the air.

In watching the barrage and its aftermath, Simplot recalled one rather strange shot which struck the flagship of the Union squadron:

One of their shots penetrated the upper deck, dropped, its velocity spent, into an inner drawer of Commodore Foote's washstand, and when I saw it, still laying where it had fallen, a curiosity of the war.

Island No. 10 was eventually cut off by land from all hope of reinforcement and so surrendered. Both Wilkie and Simplot stayed to witness the surrender, and in doing so missed one of the most famous battles of the Civil War. Wilkie had returned to Cairo when he heard the news of the battle of Shiloh. Shortly after dawn on April 6, the Confederates had smashed in the pickets of Grant's forces at Pittsburg Landing and a bloody two-day battle was fought in which Union forces just managed to hold on. When Simplot arrived at the battlefield on the Tennessee River, a full six days after the fighting had ended, the first person he saw was Wilkie:

On reaching our destination, which was lined with steamers, among the first on shore I set eyes on was F. B. Wilkie, my old tent mate of Missouri experiences. He was mounted upon a small Missouri mule, which was



waddling almost knee deep through the mud, at times barely clearing the soles of Wilkie's long rubber boots from the sticky substance. He reported the roads a mass of mud and the weather a breeder of malaria and advised us to go with him and brace up against the effects.

They went to medical detachment headquarters and took a tablespoon of quinine and liquor from a sarsaparilla bottle.

About 3,500 men had been killed in the battle of Shiloh and many more would die from their wounds. Although he had not been present at the battle itself, Wilkie found that the landscape told the story:

Nature never wrote on her tablet-rocks her history more plainly than the battle of Shiloh is written on the ravines, trees, and hillsides that extend for miles back of the river. The fierce hurricane of war that swept over the ground has rolled up the graveside billows till they lie thicker than the waves of a stormy ocean. Underbrush is mowed off by the acre as completely as if done by the scythe. Huge trees are splintered as if riven by thunderbolts. Everything, even to the smallest bush, is scarred and torn by shells and bullets.

Simplot sketched the hospital and recreated a scene of the battle as best he could from descriptions by the soldiers and correspondents. He had been proud of his pictures of the surrender of Island No. 10, but he realized now that in staying to sketch the surrender, he had missed Shiloh.

Although Wilkie had missed the battle, in searching the battlefield, he was to discover a let-



ter which would throw Iowa and Dubuque into a rage of conversation. After the battle of Fort Henry, a violin had been discovered which belonged to George Jones, one of the two sons of ex-Senator George Wallace Jones. Amidst the litter left on the battlefield of Shiloh, Franc Wilkie found a letter left behind by the Confederates. It was dated at Dubuque on July 1, 1861, and addressed to Capt. S. E. Hunter, Hunter's Rifles, Clinton, Louisiana and read as follows:

DEAR HUNTER, — By this I introduce to you my friend, Daniel O. C. Quigley, of this town, and bespeak your kindness and attention toward him. I believe he will prove himself worthy of your friendship. With every wish for your prosperity and happiness,

Your Friend,  
CHARLES D. JONES

Although George Jones had left at the start of the Civil War and joined the Confederate Army, his brother Charles had stayed in Dubuque. It was now apparent that he was "recruiting" soldiers in Dubuque for the Confederacy and sending them off with his blessing. Wilkie immediately sent the letter to the *New York Times* for publication. He later wrote:

. . . Charles, a handsome, petted young fellow, was . . . Southern in his proclivities, but being rather disinclined to action, he undertook the politic rôle and remained at home in Dubuque, and claimed to be rather inclined to be loyal. He was getting along nicely as a loyalist when



I found this letter at Shiloh. I was malicious enough to send it to "The New York Times" for publication. The reception of a copy at Dubuque sent young "Charley" in post haste southward. He became private secretary of the Confederate President and remained in the South till the close of the war.

George Wallace Jones, a pioneer in both Michigan and Wisconsin Territories and a United States Senator from Iowa for 12 years, had always been an out-spoken friend of Jefferson Davis. After the Civil War, Wilkie went to interview Jones and was told:

I have known Jeff Davis since 1823 and I love the ground on which he walks. . . He was not at heart a secessionist; he was forced into disunion by the action of his state, and he was made president against his will.

The battlefield at Shiloh was the source of several other stories by Wilkie, one of them about another Iowan. The wife of Col. William Hall of Davenport, Commander of the 11th Iowa Infantry, had been in her tent with her husband when the early Sunday morning attack began.

"Is it true," Wilkie asked her, "that you were surprised?"

"Well, you can perhaps judge as well as I can as to that. We were in our tent and not prepared to receive company . . . when a big cannonshot tore through the tent. A caller at that early hour, considering its unexpectedness, and our condition, may possibly be regarded as a surprise . . ."



Wilkie went on to report that the lady calmly finished dressing before leaving for shelter, and her dress was later found to be struck in 29 places by bullets and fragments of shell.

After Shiloh, General Henry Halleck was placed in command of Union forces in that area. His advance against the withdrawing Confederate forces was so slow that when he reached Corinth, Mississippi, the Confederates were already gone. So was Franc Wilkie. In an argument with General Halleck over the right of correspondents to travel wherever they pleased to report the news, he was advised to leave within 24 hours or be put to work "cleaning up things in the camp." Wilkie not only left, he resigned his post with the *New York Times* in disgust and joined the *Chicago Times* in July 1862, as its Washington correspondent.

Although Halleck had now ordered all newspapermen out of the lines of his army, Alexander Simplot slipped back in, disguised as a sutler. By July, Halleck had been called to Washington as general-in-chief and Simplot followed the army of General William S. Rosecrans in a fierce engagement at Iuka, an outpost east of Corinth. He also went on a river expedition against Fort Pillow on the Tennessee side of the Mississippi River. Then it was on to Memphis where a Union naval force of river steamboats easily defeated eight lightly-armed and armored Confederate boats which



came out to do battle. The citizens of Memphis watched from the bluffs as their city was rendered defenseless. Although Simplot's location did not afford him "the opportunity to witness the detail of the battle," the Iowan made a sketch of the destruction of the Confederate fleet. Since he was the only artist with the Union forces, his drawings of the battle and the subsequent surrender of the town were "scoops."

For Alexander Simplot, the end of his Civil War coverage had now come. About the time of Shiloh, Simplot had contracted a chronic case of diarrhea which he could not cure, and early in 1863 he left the armies for the last time and returned to Dubuque.

Life as a Washington correspondent proved too dull for Franc Wilkie. When he heard in the autumn of 1862 that Grant would be leading an attack on Vicksburg, Wilkie re-joined the *New York Times* and was put in charge of their operations west of the Alleghenies. He followed the campaign until almost the conclusion of the long siege which finally resulted in Union victory on July 4, 1863. Then, convinced that there would be no more major battles in the western part of the country, Wilkie resigned again.

He became one of the country's top-notch newspapermen, working for the *Chicago Times*. While overseas as a correspondent, Wilkie scored a world-wide scoop by being the first reporter to get



a copy of the then new King James version of the Bible. But in his later books, Wilkie went back to reminiscing about the Civil War.

Wilkie, with his pen, and Alexander Simplot, with his sketchbook, have left later generations a view of the Civil War that is unique — intimate glimpses of army camp and battlefield by two Iowans of outstanding ability and unimpeachable integrity.



## Editor's Comment

Much has been written about Civil War photographers, while considerably less is known about the "Special Artists" whose sketches adorned such pictorial magazines as *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. One of these "Special Artists" was Alexander Simplot, of Dubuque, who won widespread recognition, for his sketches in *Harper's Weekly*.

This issue of THE PALIMPSEST contains many reproductions of Simplot's original sketches, about half of which, as indicated in the credit line, were used by *Harper's Weekly*. They sometimes appeared in *Harper's* within a month after they were sketched, remarkable speed for that time but paling into insignificance when compared with modern Wirephoto and Photofax. Readers having access to the original *Harper's Weekly* will be impressed by the remarkable fidelity of the woodcut artist in transferring Simplot's sketch to a block of wood. Close scrutiny, however, will reveal numerous minor changes. The picture of Galenians welcoming their fellow-townsmen, General Grant, upon his return from the Civil War, is an excellent illustration of this fidelity of reproduction from sketch to woodcut.



The magnitude and variety of Alexander Simplot's work is attested by the following list of his sketches appearing in *Harper's Weekly* in 1861 and 1862.

## SIMPLOT SKETCHES IN HARPER'S WEEKLY

*Arranged Chronologically by Title and Date*

<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
Departure of Volunteers from Dubuque, Iowa.	May 25, 1861
The City of Cairo, Illinois, as seen from the camp.	June 15, 1861
Bird's Point, Missouri, opposite Cairo.	June 22, 1861
Placing the Heavy Ordnance in position at Cairo, Illinois.	June 22, 1861
Demolition of the Old Distillery at Cairo.	June 22, 1861
Batteries on the Ohio Levee at Cairo.	June 29, 1861
Battery on the Ohio Levee, used for ordering steamers to.	June 29, 1861
Landing of the Seventh and Twelfth Regiments at Cairo.	June 29, 1861
Camp Warren, Burlington, Iowa, rendezvous for Iowa Troops.	August 24, 1861
The Arsenal at St. Louis, Missouri.	August 31, 1861
Fremont's Headquarters at St. Louis, Missouri.	August 31, 1861
Departure of Fremont's Flotilla for Bird's Point.	August 31, 1861
The United States Gun-boats <i>Conestoga</i> and <i>Lexington</i> .	September 7, 1861
The Ohio Levee at Cairo.	September 14, 1861
U. S. Mississippi Gun-boats being built near St. Louis.	October 5, 1861
Building pontoons for military use on the Mississippi.	October 12, 1861
Embarkation of the Ninth Missouri Regiment for Lexington.	October 19, 1861
General Fremont's camp near Jefferson City, Missouri.	October 26, 1861
Camp of General Fremont's Army at Tipton, Missouri.	November 2, 1861
General Fremont's Army on the march through SW Missouri.	November 16, 1861
Building General Fremont's bridge across the Osage.	November 16, 1861
General Siegel crossing the Osage.	November 16, 1861
The War in Missouri — General Jim Lane's Camp.	November 23, 1861
The town of Springfield, Missouri.	November 30, 1861
Plaza at Springfield, Missouri.	November 30, 1861
General Halleck's Fleet of Mortar-boats on the Mississippi.	December 28, 1861
Applying for passes at the Provost Marshall's Office at St. Louis.	January 18, 1862
Commodore Foote's Gun-boat Flotilla on the Mississippi.	January 25, 1862
Embarkation of General McClernand's Brigade at Cairo.	February 1, 1862
Mississippi Gun-boats engaged in the attack on Fort Henry.	February 22, 1862
The capture of Fort Henry, Tennessee.	March 1, 1862
The hand-to-hand fight over Schwartz's Battery at Fort Donelson.	March 8, 1862
Seeking for the wounded, by torch-light, after the Battle.	March 5, 1862
The Attack of the Second Iowa Regiment on Fort Donelson.	March 15, 1862
Position of Batteries during the Battle of Fort Donelson.	March 15, 1862
The Gun-boat Attack on the Water Batteries at Fort Donelson.	March 15, 1862
Interior of Fort Donelson.	March 22, 1862
Interior of the Lower Water Battery at Fort Donelson.	March 22, 1862



<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>
Torpedoes with their weights & anchors left on the levee.	March 29, 1862
Water Batteries from the Bluff.	March 29, 1862
Columbus, Kentucky, after the Rebel Evacuation.	March 29, 1862
Rebel Infernal Machines found at Columbus, Kentucky.	March 29, 1862
View at New Madrid and Point Pleasant.	April 12, 1862
Gun-boat running the Rebel Batteries at Island No. 10.	April 26, 1862
Spiking the guns in the upper Rebel Battery at Island No. 10.	April 26, 1862
Steamers sunk by Rebels between Island No. 10 and New Madrid.	May 3, 1862
Island Number Ten after the surrender.	May 3, 1862
Bird's-eye view of the Federal Flotilla descending the Mississippi.	May 10, 1862
Reconnaissance of Fort Wright by the gun-boats and Mortar Fleet.	May 10, 1862
Hamburg Landing, Tennessee, Commissary Depot of Halleck's Army.	May 31, 1862
Our Army in the Southwest.	June 7, 1862
1. Commissary Store Boats.	
2. Landing Cannon.	
3. The interior of a Sanitary Steamer.	
4. The General Hospital at Hamburg.	
5. Moving Siege Guns to our lines.	
Army of the Mississippi — Looking into Corinth from Observatory.	June 21, 1862
Our Pickets at Farmington Church, two miles from Corinth.	June 21, 1862
General Pope's troops throwing up a magazine near Farmington.	June 21, 1862
Colonel Ellet's Ram Fleet approaching Memphis.	June 28, 1862
The Rebel Gun-boats off Craighead Point before the surrender.	June 28, 1862
Appearance of Ram <i>Beauregard</i> and <i>Jeff Thompson</i> after fight.	June 28, 1862
Fort Pillow repossessed by the Gun-boat Fleet.	June 28, 1862
Our Fleet off Fort Pillow on the eve of the evacuation.	June 28, 1862
The Union Fleet passing Fort Randolph on way to Memphis.	June 28, 1862
The Great Naval Battle before Memphis — June 6, 1862.	June 28, 1862
Hoisting the Stars and Stripes over the Memphis Post-Office.	July 5, 1862
Jackson's Monument at Memphis defaced by the Rebels.	July 5, 1862
Colonel Ellet's Ram Fleet on the Mississippi.	July 5, 1862
Battle at St. Charles, Arkansas — Explosion of the <i>Mound City</i> .	July 12, 1862
Grand Depot of stores for Gen. Grant's Army at Columbus, Ky.	October 4, 1862
The War in the Southwest.	October 11, 1862
1. Court-House Square, Jackson, Tennessee.	
2. A Railroad Battery.	
3. Earthwork to protect the Railroad.	
4. Cotton Fort at Jackson, Tennessee.	
The Battle of Corinth — The struggle over Robinett's Battery.	November 1, 1862
Seminary at LaGrange, Tennessee, now used as a prison.	December 20, 1862
Davis Mills, on the Mississippi and Ohio Railroad.	December 20, 1862
Grand Junction (Tennessee) of the Memphis and Charleston and Mississippi and Ohio Railroads.	December 20, 1862



The contributions of Franc B. Wilkie were as varied as they were numerous. It is not without significance that his books dealt with the Iowa scene. A fairly complete list follows:

*Davenport, Past and Present*, Davenport, Luse, Lane and Co., 1858.

*The Iowa First: Letters From the War*, Dubuque, printed at the Herald book and job establishment, 1861.

*Petrolia: or, The Oil Regions of the United States*, John R. Walsh and Co., Chicago, 1865.

*Peregrine Pickle and Poliuto's Christmas Papers*, The Western News Co., Chicago, 1869.

*Walks About Chicago*, Church, Goodman & Donnelley, 1869.

*Sketches and Notices of the Chicago Bar . . .* H. A. Sumner, Chicago, 1871.

*The Chicago Bar* Author's edition, Chicago, R. R. Donnelly, published by the author, 1872.

*Sketches Beyond the Sea*, Hazlitt & Reed, Chicago, 1879

*The Great Inventions: Their History from the Earliest Period to the Present*, J. A. Ruth & Co., Philadelphia and Chicago, 1883.

*Marquis' Hand-book of Chicago*, A. N. Marquis & Co., 1885. Preface: "Much of the matter was written by Mr. Franc B. Wilkie."

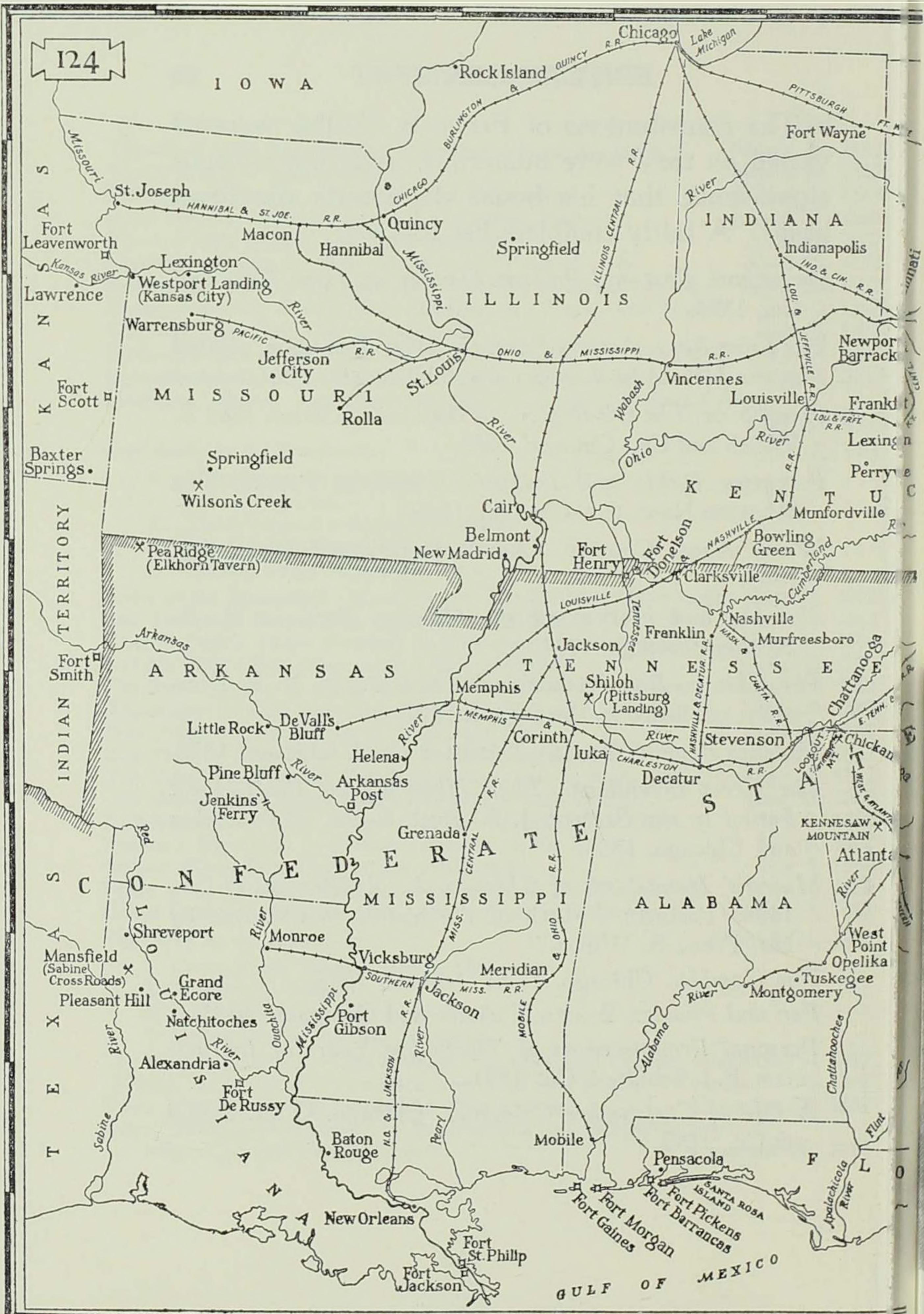
*The Gambler*, Chicago, T. S. Denison, 1888.

*Pen and Powder*, Boston, Ticknor and Company, 1888.

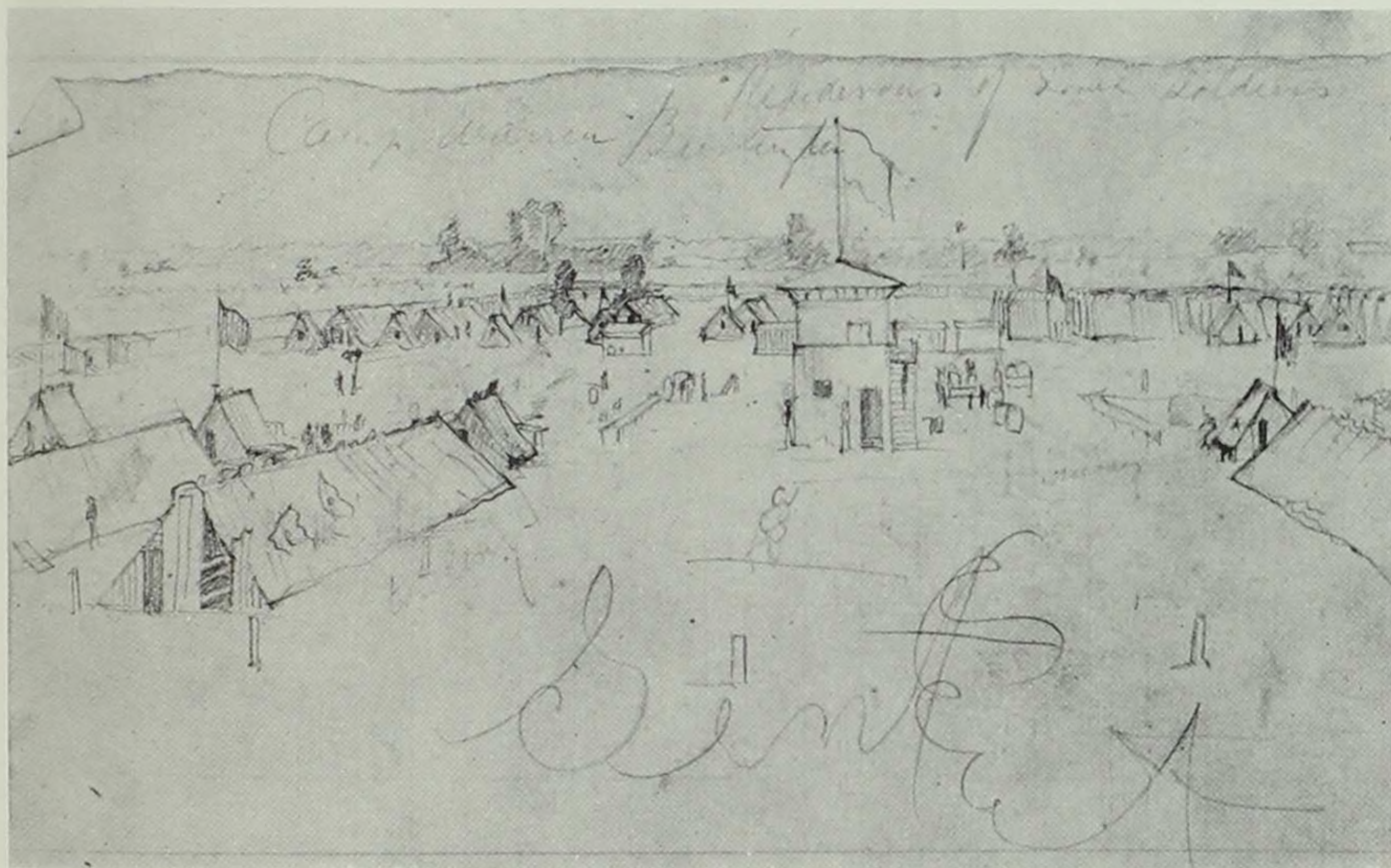
*Personal Reminiscences of Thirty-five Years of Journalism*, F. J. Schulte & Co., 1891.

*A Life of Christopher Columbus*, Chicago, C. H. Sergel & Co., 1892.







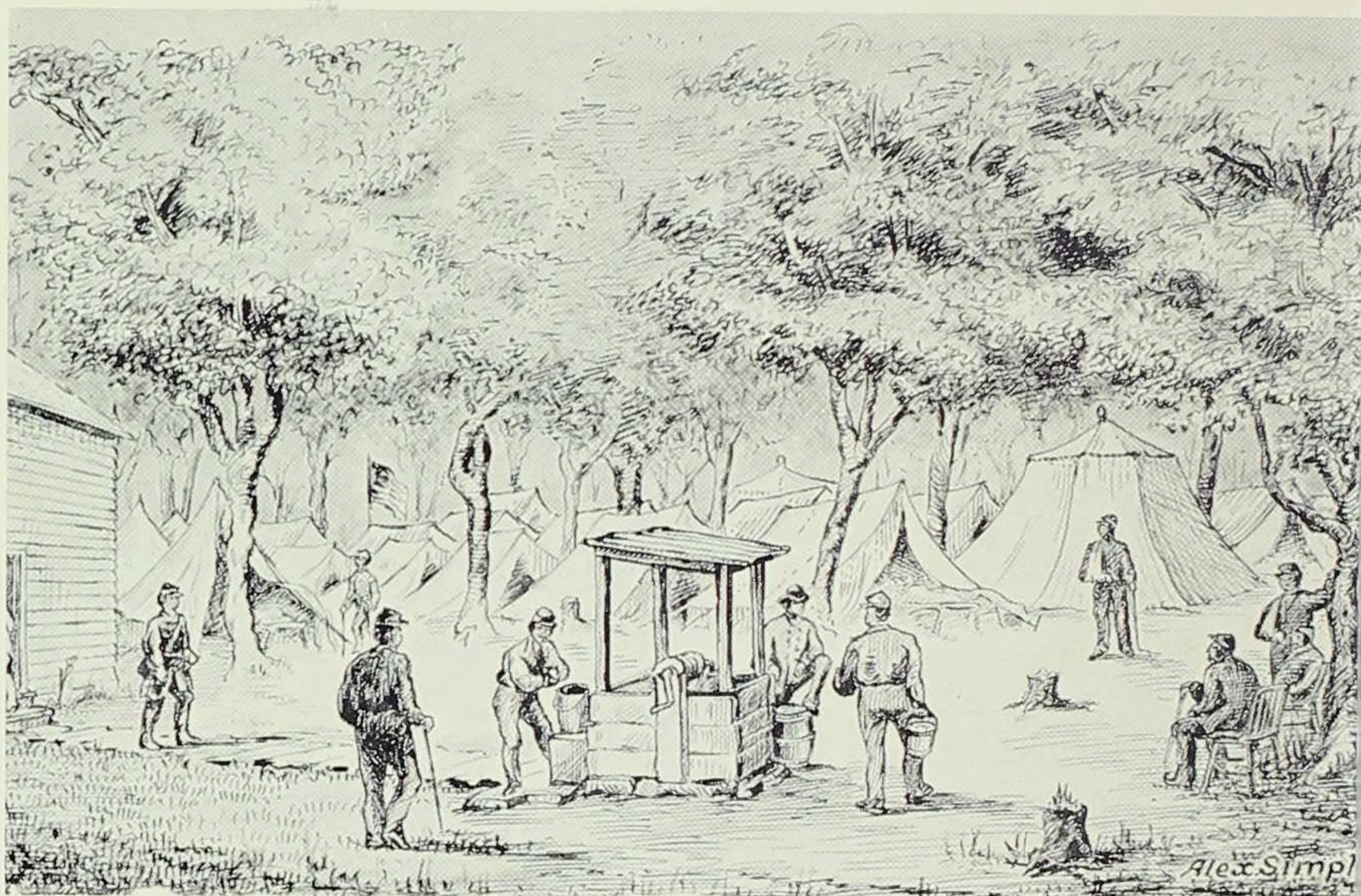


Preliminary sketch of Camp Warren at Burlington, Iowa. Simplot probably redid and completed this sketch as *Harper's Weekly* of August 24, 1861, reproduces the picture in complete form and beautifully done.



Rebel Soldiers Disarmed at Fort Donelson — Stacking Their Guns.





Hospital for the Sick at Hamburg Landing — 4 miles below Pittsburg Landing.

Attack of Second Iowa on Batteries of Fort Donelson.

From *Harper's Weekly*, March 15, 1862

